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Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Covering the period 1 January 2011 – 30 June 2012

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Sixty-seventh session
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Note

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I. Introduction

1. The year 2011 was marked by a rapid and uninterrupted succession of large-scale humanitarian crises unfolding against a backdrop of political, social and economic turmoil. Conflicts in Côte d'Ivoire, Libya, Somalia and Sudan alone forced more than 800,000 refugees into neighbouring countries, the highest number in over a decade. The Middle East continued to experience turbulence with more than 127,000 persons from the Syrian Arab Republic having sought refuge in neighbouring countries, primarily Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, and more than one million displaced internally. In addition, an estimated 3.5 million people were newly displaced within the borders of their countries in 2011, one-fifth more than in 2010. Today more than 42.5 million people in the world are displaced across or within borders by violence and persecution.

2. The succession of large-scale emergencies constituted an unprecedented challenge for the Office's emergency response, with 780 emergency staff deployed to operations globally, drawn from either UNHCR's emergency roster or its partners' standby rosters. UNHCR was often required to respond in hazardous operational environments, with both staff and partners exposed to violent attacks and kidnappings. Six UNHCR staff members were killed in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, and the Syrian Arab Republic. This demonstrates the continued dangers that aid workers face when humanitarian space is under threat.

3. While new situations of conflict continued to multiply in 2011, old ones failed to be resolved, such as in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Iraq. The Somali conflict, already 20 years old, degenerated further and, combined with the worst drought in decades, drove close to 300,000 refugees into neighbouring Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Yemen. This brought the total number of Somali refugees in the region to some 950,000 by the end of 2011. As a result, durable solutions have remained elusive for a large number of refugees under UNHCR's mandate.

4. Meanwhile, conflicts have been exacerbated by the simultaneous impact of population growth, urbanization, climate change and food, water and energy insecurity. Growing levels of poverty and unemployment have proven to be sources of social and political unrest. In this scenario of continuous new emergencies and drawn-out conflict, solutions can only be achieved through strong commitment from States.

5. In Geneva in December 2011, UNHCR facilitated a landmark Intergovernmental Event at the Ministerial Level of United Nations Member States on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. This Ministerial Intergovernmental Event brought together 155 of the 193 UN Member States and opened a new chapter in international engagement on forced displacement and statelessness. More than 100 States made pledges during the meeting, which, when implemented, will substantially improve the protection of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and stateless persons[1].

6. This report provides an account of the work carried out by UNHCR between January 2011 and mid-2012. More detailed information, including on regional and country operations, can be found in UNHCR's Global Report 2011 at: http://www.unhcr.org/globalreport.

[1] Documentation related to the Ministerial Intergovernmental Event, including the Report of the meeting and the Ministerial Communiqué, may be found at: www.unhcr.org/ministerial.

II. Populations of concern

7. At the end of 2011, there were over 35.4 million people of concern to UNHCR,[2] including 10.4 million refugees. The latter number is approximately 144,000 less than in 2010, due to a reduction of about 16 per cent in the estimates of Afghan and Iraqi refugee populations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the fact that a number of refugees found durable solutions, mainly voluntary repatriation.

8. The number of people displaced within their own country as a result of conflict was an estimated 26.4 million at the end of 2011, of whom 15.5 million benefited from UNHCR protection and assistance. The latter figure represented an increase of almost 800,000 compared to the previous year.

9. By the end of 2011, statistics on stateless populations were available for 64 countries, compared to the 30 countries reporting these figures in 2004, when UNHCR started systematically collecting data on stateless populations. Currently, 3.5 million stateless persons have been identified by UNHCR, a figure comparable to that reported in 2010. Despite improvements in the number of countries reporting and in the reliability of reported figures, UNHCR is unable to provide comprehensive statistics on the number of stateless persons globally. It is, however, estimated that the total number of stateless persons worldwide is over 12 million people.

10. During 2011, some 876,100 individual claims for asylum or refugee status were submitted to Governments or UNHCR offices in 171 countries or territories. This constituted a 3 per cent increase compared to the previous year (850,300 claims). UNHCR registered 11 per cent of the global total. The highest number of new claims filed with UNHCR or States in 2011 came from asylum-seekers originating from Zimbabwe (52,500), Afghanistan (43,000), Somalia (35,900), Côte d'Ivoire (33,000), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (31,500), Myanmar (29,800) and Iraq (29,100).

III. Consolidating internal reform

11. Reform initiatives undertaken in recent years helped the Office enhance its efficiency and effectiveness. UNHCR's volume of activity has nearly doubled in the past five years, with only a marginal increase in staff globally and a significant reduction at Headquarters. Six years after the reform process began, Headquarters costs have been reduced from 14 to 9 per cent of overall expenditure, and staff costs from 41 to 27 per cent. Savings allowed the Office to address gaps in water, sanitation, health and nutrition, benefiting some 1.3 million refugees in Africa and Asia. New managerial priorities are being set to modernize and simplify systems and processes in order to reinforce UNHCR's capacity to deliver assistance, protection and solutions to people of concern.

12. The Division of Information Systems and Telecommunications was restructured and decentralized, with a Service Centre created in Amman, and regional hubs established in Budapest, Kuala Lumpur and Panama City. This has brought information technology support closer to the Field and strengthened operations.

13. Investments made during the reporting period have focused on improving UNHCR's ability to deliver, notably by strengthening protection and emergency response capacity. During 2011, over 40 new protection positions were created across the globe in areas such as resettlement, refugee status determination (RSD), statelessness, and cluster leadership for

[2] Table 1 presents the populations of concern to UNHCR at the end of 2011. For more detailed statistical information, see UNHCR's Global Trends 2011, available at: www.unhcr.org/statistics.

the inter-agency response to situations of internal displacement. Protection learning was also strengthened, targeting both staff and partners.

14. Last year saw the full implementation of UNHCR's global stock management system, a key feature of its strengthened emergency response capacity. A new network of seven supply hubs in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, together with a 20 per cent increase in stock levels of relief items, allows UNHCR to respond within 72 hours to simultaneous emergencies affecting up to 600,000 persons. New staff deployment mechanisms are being developed, allowing timely deployments at the outset of a crisis, and a senior-level emergency roster has been established to ensure adequate leadership in emergencies.

15. A current priority is to improve oversight and accountability, commensurate with the Office's significantly increased budget and responsibilities. In 2011, an Independent Audit and Oversight Committee (IAOC) was established to assist the High Commissioner and the Executive Committee on audit and oversight, as well as financial management. The IAOC assumed its functions in the first half of 2012. Over the next two years, UNHCR plans to further strengthen programme control and introduce a risk management framework.

IV. Protection and operational overview

A. Major challenges

16. Emergency situations were not the only challenges during the reporting period. Waning political will – exacerbated by some communities' disenchantment with hosting refugees, as well as increasing government concerns about transnational threats, including terrorism and crime, and irregular mixed movements – complicated protection responses. *Refoulement* to certain countries rose in 2011, as did threats of *refoulement* in the context of national security. The Office was concerned by the acceptance, by some countries, of the "safe third country" concept as a basis for removal without necessary protection safeguards. The detention of asylum-seekers and refugees, including children, was on the rise, and violence against women and girls continued to be a major problem in most displacement contexts.

17. Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) remains a threat to displaced women and girls, as well as men and boys, in all regions of the world. As part of the commemorations of the 60th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention, UNHCR held regional dialogues[3] with over 1,000 displaced women and girls to better understand the problems they and their families faced. The Office issued an updated strategy, Action against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, which supports UNHCR operations to design SGBV strategies that reflect the needs of at-risk populations and are adaptable to either stable or emergency contexts, as well as camp, rural or urban settings. At the Ministerial Intergovernmental Event, the High Commissioner pledged to further strengthen UNHCR's commitment to addressing SGBV. Concrete results thus far include funding for SGBV programming in 12 priority countries and the creation of four regional protection posts to support implementation of the SGBV strategy.

18. The protection of refugees and asylum-seekers at sea remains a major challenge. More than 1,500 people, including potential asylum-seekers, drowned or went missing while attempting to cross the Mediterranean in 2011, rendering it the deadliest year since UNHCR began recording these figures in 2006. A record 103,000 refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants from the Horn of Africa made the perilous journey to Yemen across

[3] More information regarding the regional dialogues with displaced women and girls may be found at: http://www.unhcr.org/dialogues-women-children.

the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea: 140 persons are known to have drowned in the attempt between January 2011 and June 2012. In the Asia-Pacific region, some 430 presumed asylum-seekers are known to have drowned in maritime incidents.

B. Refugee protection in the context of international migration

19. Modern migration trends continued to be complex. Those with international protection needs often travel irregularly alongside other groups, using the same routes and methods of transport, and individuals themselves often have multiple and mixed motivations for movement, including economic, social and political.

20. Assisting States and other partners to develop protection-sensitive strategies to address mixed migration remained a key priority for UNHCR, with activities focused on a number of interrelated initiatives. This included the completion of the three-year project on the 10-Point Plan of Action on Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration; initiatives to enhance inter-State cooperation related to the protection of refugees at sea; efforts to address the protection needs of trafficked and smuggled persons; and active engagement in global and regional consultative processes. The Office worked to strengthen normative and institutional frameworks, build and ensure the proper functioning of asylum systems, and reinforce its capacity to deal with the increasing number of applications for refugee status.

21. Together with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNHCR organized a Global Round Table on Alternatives to Detention. The Round Table concluded that there is an absence of any empirical evidence that detention either deters irregular migration or discourages people from seeking asylum. It further found that treating asylum-seekers with dignity and humanity improved their cooperation throughout the asylum process, including rates of voluntary return for those found not to be refugees. Subsequent national and sub-regional round tables in Australia, Belgium and Thailand confirmed governments' increasing interest in introducing or strengthening alternatives to detention. As a result of such efforts, over the past two years, the use of detention has been reduced in nine countries.

C. Strengthening implementation of the 1951 Convention, its 1967 Protocol and the Statelessness Conventions

22. Throughout 2011 UNHCR commemorated the 60th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness through initiatives to identify and address gaps in international protection and explore new avenues to strengthen international protection. The commemorations provided an opportunity to reflect on the challenges to achieving full implementation of the refugee and statelessness instruments and on the evolving protection context in the twenty-first century. They also helped raise public awareness and promote tolerance and diversity.

23. The Ministerial Intergovernmental Event adopted a Ministerial Communiqué, reaffirming that the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol are the foundation of the international refugee protection regime and have enduring value and relevance. The Communiqué recognized the importance of respecting and upholding the principles and values that underlie these instruments, including the core principle of *non-refoulement*. Although the number of States parties either to the 1951 Refugee Convention and/or the 1967 Protocol remained steady at 148, a number of States in Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific and Europe pledged to review their reservations to these instruments with a view to considering whether to withdraw them.

24. Indicative of a growing commitment by States to tackle situations of statelessness, several substantial breakthroughs occurred, due in part to increased global attention to the problem afforded by the commemorations. A noteworthy success, following an accessions

campaign launched as part of the commemorations, was the accession by 12 States – Benin, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Croatia, Georgia, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, the Philippines, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Turkmenistan – to either or both the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Statelessness Convention. This is the highest number of accessions to the Statelessness Conventions in any twelve-month period, bringing to 74 the number of States parties to the 1954 Convention, and to 45 the number of States parties to the 1961 Convention, as of June 2012.

25. At the 2011 Ministerial Intergovernmental Event, 33 States pledged either to accede to the Conventions or to examine the possibility of doing so. Five of these pledges have already been fulfilled. Forty-one States made other statelessness-related pledges. These included removing gender discrimination from nationality laws; implementing better civil registration and documentation systems to prevent and reduce statelessness; establishing statelessness determination procedures; and undertaking mapping initiatives and awareness-raising campaigns.

D. Identification, prevention and reduction of statelessness and the protection of stateless persons

26. UNHCR advised on legal safeguards to prevent and reduce statelessness in 14 States that were in the process of reviewing their nationality legislation. Kenya achieved a breakthrough with its 2011 Citizenship and Immigration Act, which provides that stateless persons who have resided in Kenya since independence may register as citizens if they do so within five years of the Act's adoption.

27. To assist States and legal practitioners, UNHCR released three sets of guidelines: the first on the definition of a "stateless person," as expressed in the 1954 Convention; the second on stateless determination procedures; and the third on the status of stateless persons. In the Americas, UNHCR developed a model law for the implementation of the 1954 Convention, which is being considered by Brazil, Ecuador and Panama. Studies commissioned by UNHCR mapped stateless populations in several industrialized States, including the number and profile of stateless individuals, as well as the causes and possible solutions to their predicament.

28. Decisive progress was also made toward the resolution of some protracted statelessness situations. In Turkmenistan two presidential decrees granted citizenship to 3,318 stateless persons in 2011. The decrees followed the completion of the second registration drive since 2007, organized by the Turkmen Government with UNHCR support, to identify undocumented individuals throughout the country. In Kyrgyzstan more than 28,000 holders of expired Soviet passports received Kyrgyz passports, and 2,094 stateless persons were granted citizenship by decree between 2009 and 2011. Following an April 2011 decree offering citizenship to one group of stateless Kurds in the Syrian Arab Republic, official sources indicate that some 69,000 of the approximately 150,000 people who could benefit from the decree had received citizenship documents by the end of 2011. The Kuwaiti Government recently announced that it will allow for the naturalization of some 34,000 Bidoons.

29. The independence of South Sudan in July 2011 prompted concerns that a new statelessness situation might emerge, following the pattern of other recent State successions. UNHCR provided the Government of South Sudan with technical support in the drafting of legislation, including an interim constitution and a nationality act. Concerns persist that many individuals may be deprived of Sudanese nationality, despite not being able to acquire proof of South Sudanese nationality. UNHCR continued advocacy on behalf of and provided assistance to persons of southern Sudanese origin in the Republic of Sudan, including operational support for the issuance of identity documentation to citizens of the new State and technical advice to the civil registry of Sudan to facilitate the issuance of documentation to persons at risk of statelessness.

E. Regional challenges

30. In Africa, the operational environment was characterized by new and ongoing emergencies, as well as by growing opportunities to bring closure to several protracted refugee situations, as described in Chapter V below. The number of people of concern to the Office in sub-Saharan Africa increased significantly, from slightly over 10 million in January 2011 to over 12 million by the end of the year. In January 2012, fighting between Tuareg rebels and Malian forces resumed, breaking a 2009 agreement that officially ended the Tuareg rebellion. Close to 320,000 Malians have been forced to flee to neighbouring Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger, or seek safety in other parts of Mali.

31. Drought, famine and violence forced hundreds of thousands of Somalis across borders into neighbouring countries, mainly Kenya and Ethiopia, including an estimated 30,000 during the first six months of 2012 alone. It is estimated that one-third of Somalia's 7.5 million nationals are either internally displaced or living in another country as refugees. In Kenya, the security environment in Dadaab deteriorated significantly. While security threats restricted the movement of aid workers in the camps, basic services were uninterrupted as a result of a "continuity plan" that had been drawn up by humanitarian organizations and refugee leaders. Armed conflict continued unabated in several parts of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, where more than 8,900 cases of rape were reported in 2011. The largely peaceful referendum on the independence of South Sudan was followed by armed conflict in the border areas of the new country with Sudan, where conflict-induced food shortages are growing. By June 2012, more than 162,000 Sudanese refugees had fled to South Sudan, the majority to Upper Nile State, and more than 36,000 to western Ethiopia.

32. In the Americas, the Colombia situation remained UNHCR's largest operation. Despite the Colombian Government's renewed efforts to provide solutions to displacement, including through the adoption of the Law on Victims and Land Restitution, violence due to the presence of irregular armed groups and criminal gangs continued to plague parts of the country. Nevertheless, UNHCR continued to support the Government's efforts to explore potential solutions for displaced persons, including through the joint United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNHCR Transitional Solutions Initiative, undertaken in cooperation with the World Bank. In June 2011, UNHCR and OHCHR issued a joint advisory on returns to Haiti, appealing to governments to renew residence permits and establish other mechanisms allowing Haitians who were displaced by the 2010 earthquake to remain outside the country on humanitarian grounds. More broadly, the Mexico Plan of Action and the Brasilia Declaration continued to guide the strategies of all UNHCR operations in Latin America.

33. In Asia and the Pacific, some 9.6 million people, representing about a quarter of the total number of persons of concern to UNHCR, remained displaced within the region. Of these, fewer than 1.3 million were living in camps, with the overwhelming majority residing in urban settings. The prolongation of some refugee situations, combined with disparities in asylum practices among countries, continued to cause irregular movements further afield. As a result, UNHCR's work in the region focused on finding solutions (such as the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, as described in Chapter V), including through the strategic use of resettlement; promoting self-reliance for urban refugees; contributing to effective responses to emergencies resulting from natural disasters; and furthering the dialogue with concerned States on a regional approach to refugees and irregular movements. Important steps forward include the establishment of the Almaty Process for Central Asia, the endorsement by the Bali Process of a Regional Cooperation Framework for South-East Asia, and the establishment of a Regional Support Office in Bangkok.

34. In Europe, economic difficulties and unemployment in many countries had a negative effect on public attitudes towards refugees, while budget cuts affected reception standards and support for the integration of refugees. Hardening attitudes towards irregular entry and calls for stricter border control posed additional challenges. Sustained efforts

were made to ensure access to territory and asylum for those in need of protection, including work with States and other partners on protection-sensitive border management procedures and safeguards for asylum-seekers. The Office promoted integration services for refugees, ran campaigns to foster tolerance and reduce xenophobia, and worked to build public support for refugee protection throughout Europe. Efforts were also stepped up to promote solidarity and responsibility-sharing among countries in the region, including through a stronger European role in global resettlement efforts.

35. In the Middle East and North Africa, the changing political landscape and social unrest resulted in massive displacement during the reporting period, adding to the already large numbers of refugees and IDPs in the region. The crisis in Libya forced nearly one million Libyans and third-country nationals to flee to neighbouring countries, mainly Tunisia and Egypt. UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) jointly implemented a large-scale evacuation programme that assisted more than 300,000 third-country nationals to return to their homelands. In addition to the displacement of Syrian nationals, as mentioned in Chapter I, unrest in the Syrian Arab Republic has created an increasingly difficult environment for Iraqi and other refugees hosted in the country. Events in Yemen aggravated internal displacement, with the number of IDPs reaching more than half a million, while the country remained host to more than 215,000 refugees from the Horn of Africa. Recently Government forces regained control over parts of Abyan province, a development which may pave the way for the return of IDPs from Aden. At the same time, the Office is concerned about the humanitarian situation in the Sinai and, together with other stake-holders, is seeking to assess the scale of needs and possible remedies.

36. UNHCR continued to provide protection and assistance to the Sahrawi refugees in the camps near Tindouf, Algeria, while the World Food Programme (WFP) provided food rations and supplementary food rations to the most vulnerable refugees. At the end of 2011, over 42,600 persons had registered for the Confidence Building Measures (CBM) programme in the Sahrawi camps in Tindouf and from Western Sahara Territory, which aims to bring together families which have been separated for some 37 years. In early 2012 UNHCR chaired high level meetings in Geneva with the two parties, Morocco and Frente POLISARIO, and the two neighbouring counties, Algeria and Mauritania, with the aim of enhancing coordination and cooperation with all stakeholders regarding the implementation of the CBM programme. Already some 12,300 persons have benefitted from the programme, and a recently deployed aircraft with greater carrying capacity will increase the number of family visits from 2,000 to 6,000 persons annually. UNHCR organized two cultural seminars in Portugal for a limited number of refugees from the camps in Tindouf and from the Western Sahara Territory.

F. Safety and security of staff and populations of concern

37. The challenging security environment during the reporting period demonstrated the need for continual adaptation and response to emerging security needs. UNHCR has strengthened its capacity for information gathering and analysis. This has included increased professionalization of the field safety work force, the development of a cadre of security staff with critical skills, and a training programme targeting Field Safety Officers and senior managers.

38. The Field Safety Section provided direct assistance to managers of field operations through security-risk assessments, technical advice, training and inter-agency security management processes, as well as direct support and management of critical security incidents. More than 30 field missions were conducted in 2011. UNHCR's Security Steering Committee, led by the High Commissioner or the Assistant High Commissioner (Operations), regularly reviewed countries deemed to be at higher risk.

39. UNHCR continued to work with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security and participated actively in the Inter-Agency Security Management Network.

Changes in system-wide policies such as the introduction of a new Security Level System, were communicated to staff and have been incorporated in training materials.

40. In 2011, the Office issued the Manual on Security for Persons of Concern, which was developed through consultations led by the Division of Emergency, Security and Supply, in cooperation with the Division of International Protection and UNHCR staff in the Field. The Manual provides guidance and best practices for staff and partners on how to respond to recurring security threats against persons of concern. The rollout of the Manual has been accompanied by a training programme, and it has been incorporated in existing learning programmes, including UNHCR's Workshop on Emergency Management.

G. Emergency preparedness and response

41. In 2011, UNHCR adopted a new approach to emergency management, consisting of a strong centralized coordination mechanism with the ability to draw upon the entire range of organizational capacities, resources and expertise to support operations as needed. With an increase in specialist profiles required for emergencies (such as registration and information management officers), UNHCR was able to tap into expertise beyond its Emergency Response Team roster. Among those deployed were field safety advisers, supply officers, and shelter experts.

42. UNHCR benefited from standby partnership arrangements to complement its internal capacity for emergency deployments, particularly in technical fields. More than 340 persons from nine standby partners were deployed to emergency operations during the reporting period, constituting around 44 per cent of emergency deployments. The Office welcomed an agreement with Argentina for standby support from the "White Helmets" to complement existing partner agreements, primarily from the Nordic countries and Germany.

43. During the reporting period, UNHCR's Supply Management Service dispatched 140 airlifts with nearly 4,500 metric tons of relief items, assisting more than 600,000 people. In addition, 151 airlifts repatriated more than 29,500 persons of concern from Tunisia. Seventeen airlifts to Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia were carried out simultaneously over two months in 2011, including UNHCR's first airlift in more than five years to Mogadishu. Meanwhile, flights were dispatched with core relief items and tents in response to the deteriorating food security situation and forced displacement in South Sudan.

H. Assuring basic needs and essential services

44. The many large-scale emergencies involving massive displacement presented challenges in meeting the basic needs of refugees and others of concern. In the face of increasing shelter needs in simultaneous emergencies, providing adequate living conditions required particular attention, prompting the Office to establish a Shelter and Settlement Section to strengthen capacity and ensure a timely and efficient response.

45. Many refugees in camps or settlements have limited prospects for a dignified life. Lack of space and livelihood opportunities put girls and boys at risk of sexual violence, forced recruitment and exploitation, and often lead to secondary irregular movements. In response, UNHCR has increased its engagement in the livelihood sector in recent years. The Office's global budget for livelihood programming reached nearly US$ 157 million in 2011, a 33 per cent rise from 2010. Livelihood programming has enabled refugees to be active members of society, contributing to the social and economic life of the host countries, and has promoted peaceful coexistence between displaced populations and local communities. Twelve operations in all regions were provided with assistance in designing comprehensive livelihood programmes during the reported period.

46. Implementation of UNHCR's 2009 *Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas* focused on livelihood empowerment and self-reliance activities, with eleven countries developing comprehensive multi-year strategies, as well as on ensuring access to public services such as health and education. UNHCR worked to expand access to national health insurance schemes for refugees in urban areas and provided cash and vouchers for shelter and food.

47. Access to quality education remained a key objective. A new education strategy for 2012-2016 was elaborated in broad consultation with partners and rolled out in 13 priority countries. The strategy focuses on improving education quality, developing partnerships with ministries of education, strengthening national partner capacity, and making use of innovative technologies and communications. Increased investments in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector helped improve access to safe water and adequate sanitation facilities in 10 priority countries in Africa and Asia. The monitoring of public health programmes improved, including in emergencies, with the use of UNHCR's online Health Information System (webHIS)[4]. This field-based tool allows UNHCR and partners to collect and report public health data, enabling adequate programming and responses. A number of large-scale refugee emergencies in 2011 saw populations arriving in extremely malnourished condition. Of the 57 refugee sites surveyed globally in 2011, 9 achieved the acceptable crisis classification threshold, set by the World Health Organization, of less than 5 per cent of children 5-59 months of age suffering from acute malnutrition, and 26 achieved the target of less than 10 per cent.

48. As co-convenors in the UNAIDS Division of Labour for "Addressing HIV in Emergencies," UNHCR and WFP worked with the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to ensure access to HIV protection, prevention, treatment, care and support for refugees and other persons of concern. In 2011, 93 per cent of refugees had access to anti-retroviral treatment at the same level as the national population. However many countries still do not mention refugees and IDPs in their national HIV strategies. UNHCR continued to advocate for refugees and IDPs to have access to national HIV and AIDS programmes and services, and encouraged governments, donors and partners to promote environments that mitigate the impact of HIV and reduce stigma and discrimination against those affected by HIV.

V. Resolving protracted situations and achieving durable solutions

A. Protracted refugee situations

49. Some 7.2 million refugees are currently living in protracted situations of exile. Nonetheless, 2011 brought hope of progress. In Africa, three of the most protracted refugee situations are drawing to a close, as the comprehensive solutions strategies for Angolan, Liberian and Rwandan refugees are being implemented along with the cessation of refugee status.

50. In the western Balkans, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia drew up a regional plan to resolve displacement stemming from the 1991-1995 conflict. UNHCR played a catalytic role in this process, which aims to bring about durable solutions for 73,000 vulnerable refugees remaining in the region. The Governments agreed to provide housing for the most vulnerable among the displaced, many of whom still live in collective centres. This regional housing project will offer a permanent housing solution to

[4] The Health Information System can be viewed at: http://his.unhcr.org.

those who opt for voluntary return and reintegration in their place of origin, or local integration in their current place of residence.

51. Afghans still constitute the largest protracted refugee population in the world for UNHCR. There are close to three million registered Afghan refugees, most of whom have been residing in neighbouring Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran for over 30 years. A multi-year Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees to support Voluntary Repatriation, Sustainable Reintegration and Assistance to Host Countries has been developed, the result of intense consultations among the three Governments and UNHCR. Underlying the strategy is the imperative of enabling conditions conducive to voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration through community-based investments in areas of high return in Afghanistan and bridging the gap between humanitarian assistance and development. In recognition of the asylum space provided by neighbouring host countries, the strategy includes enhanced efforts to facilitate voluntary repatriation and support to refugee-hosting communities. Discussions with the concerned Governments are also ongoing with respect to alternative temporary-stay arrangements and further opportunities for resettlement. An international conference on the solutions strategy, held in Geneva on 3 May 2012 and co-hosted by the Government of Switzerland and UNHCR, endorsed this new solutions agenda.

52. In Nepal, the large-scale resettlement programme started in late 2007 has provided a durable solution for some 60,000 refugees from Bhutan and opened up the opportunity for an inter-agency, community-based development programme to promote peaceful co-existence between the host communities and the remaining refugees. Significant political developments in Myanmar may have an impact on one of Asia's most protracted refugee situations.

B. Voluntary repatriation

53. In 2011, an estimated 532,000 refugees were able to return home voluntarily, the highest number since 2008, but still the third-lowest recorded of the past decade. The main countries of return included Libya (149,000), Côte d'Ivoire (135,200), Afghanistan (71,000), Iraq (67,100), Sudan (50,100), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (21,100).

54. Voluntary repatriation to Afghanistan remained important in terms of efforts to resolve the protracted situation. Overall, more than 5.5 million Afghan refugees – or roughly one-fifth of Afghanistan's population – have returned home since 2002, most of them with UNHCR's assistance.

55. The return figure for Iraq was the highest number since 2004, when 194,000 persons had returned. The number of returnees in 2011 (67,100) more than doubled those in 2010 (28,900). Overall, more than half a million Iraqis have returned between 2003 and 2011.

C. Self-reliance and local solutions

56. The commemorations of the Conventions provided an opportunity to generate additional interest in and commitment to local solutions. Many countries indicated a willingness to support self-reliance initiatives and consider local solutions – such as alternative legal status or naturalization – in their pledges at the 2011 Ministerial Intergovernmental Event.

57. In Africa, UNHCR assisted several States with local integration initiatives. The Government of Zambia pledged to integrate locally up to 10,000 Angolan refugees, some of whom have been in exile for decades, and has called on the international community for support. Residence permits were issued to more than 3,000 former refugees from the Republic of the Congo following the Government of Gabon's declaration ending their refugee status. In Eastern Sudan, close collaboration among UNHCR, UNDP and the

World Bank, under the Transitional Solutions Initiative, aims to bring economic self-sufficiency to 12 refugee camps that have hosted Eritrean refugees for four decades, and to allow for their gradual conversion into village communities. In Darfur, Sudan, UNHCR is shifting from a camp-based approach to a stronger focus on solutions, building on the progressive integration of IDPs in urban areas. Local integration opportunities are also being explored for some 14,000 Mauritanian refugees who have chosen to remain in Senegal.

58. Where solutions are not immediately available, support for refugee self-reliance and mobility has led to additional opportunities. For example, the Ethiopian "out-of-camp" policy allows Eritrean refugees who can financially support themselves to live outside the camps. In 2011, the Government augmented this programme with educational scholarships. In this way, refugees are offered an alternative to protracted displacement and long-term dependency.

59. In the Americas, legislation passed in Panama in October 2011 allowed for the regularization of approximately 900 Colombian nationals, previously under a temporary protection regime. The Cities of Solidarity framework aided the local integration and self-reliance of refugees, mostly in urban areas.

D. Resettlement

60. Resettlement remained a vital tool for securing the protection of refugees, an integral element of comprehensive solutions strategies, and a tangible demonstration of international solidarity in securing solutions for a number of refugee situations. However, there is a gap between needs and places available, with an estimated 800,000 refugees globally requiring resettlement and only 80,000 places made available each year. In 2011, less than 1 per cent of the world's refugees benefited from this durable solution.

61. Over the past two years, the resettlement base expanded to 26 countries. Emerging resettlement countries, including Japan, Paraguay and Romania, began implementing their resettlement programmes, and others provided places on an *ad hoc* basis. During the Intergovernmental Ministerial Event in December 2011, over 20 countries pledged to maintain or expand the capacity of their global resettlement schemes. Other positive developments included the adoption of the Joint European Union Resettlement Scheme.

62. In 2011, UNHCR submitted the cases of some 92,000 refugees for resettlement, a 16 per cent drop from 2010[1]. The decline may be attributed to the processing of complex cases, as well as to the necessity of limiting submission levels in order to prevent an increasing backlog by resettlement countries of cases for certain refugee populations. Women and girls at risk constituted ten per cent of all submissions. This represented the highest percentage achieved in the last six years, reaching the target set by the Executive Committee in its Conclusion No. 105 (LVII) of 2006.

63. According to governmental statistics, a total of 79,800 refugees were admitted by resettlement countries. The main beneficiaries were refugees from Bhutan (18,000), Myanmar (17,900), Iraq (8,900), and Somalia (4,800). The United States of America and Canada admitted most of the resettled refugees in 2011 – with 51,550 and 12,900 refugees admitted respectively. They were followed by Australia (9,200), Sweden (1,900), and Norway (1,300).

64. Of all those resettled in 2011, some 61,600 refugees departed for resettlement with UNHCR's assistance, which was 14 per cent less than in 2010. This decrease was due to tighter security screening, lack of access to major processing countries and limited reception capacity in resettlement countries. The top three countries of asylum from which refugees departed for resettlement with UNHCR's assistance remained the same as in 2010: Nepal (18,150), Thailand (9,600) and Malaysia (8,400).

65. UNHCR continued to work with resettlement States, NGOs and other partners on expanding resettlement opportunities, addressing processing challenges, eliminating

restrictive and discriminatory selection criteria, enhancing the quality and efficiency of submissions, and reinforcing the integration capacity of receiving communities. The Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement, Working Group on Resettlement (ATCR/WGR) provides an important forum in this regard.

66. The three emergency transit facilities in Romania, the Philippines and Slovakia continued to play a key role in evacuating refugees in emergency situations, including in response to the Libya crisis, and facilitating access for resettlement countries. Together, they offer some 400 places for emergency relocation.

VI. Partnerships and coordination

67. In 2011, UNHCR strengthened alliances with Governments, UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, national and international NGOs, academia and the private sector.

68. NGOs make up almost 80 per cent of UNHCR's implementing partners. In 2011, the Office channeled US$ 677 million of its expenditures through 762 NGOs (151 international and 611 national). This represented a 20 per cent increase over 2010. During the reporting period, High Commissioner initiated a structured dialogue with key partners with the aim of achieving more transparent, results-oriented and trust-based relationships.

69. Partnerships with UN organizations were paramount in helping UNHCR implement its programmes. As part of an ongoing investment in reinforcing UNHCR's emergency response capacity, steps were taken to strengthen UNHCR's field-level leadership and coordination role in refugee emergencies, including through enhanced information management and resource mobilization arrangements, and guidance on ensuring synergies between refugee coordination mechanisms and other humanitarian coordination arrangements. UNHCR has been strongly engaged in the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and, under the leadership of the Emergency Relief Coordinator, has participated in the development of the Transformative Agenda to strengthen humanitarian leadership in emergencies. In support of this initiative, the Office has engaged in training senior cluster coordinators with sufficient technical expertise and operational experience for the three global clusters which it leads in the inter-agency response to situations of internal displacement. In 2011, the Secretary-General's Policy Committee adopted a decision on durable solutions, which provides a new framework aimed at strengthening the UN response to durable solutions for returning refugees and IDPs.

70. UNHCR continued to place great importance on its partnerships with regional organizations. In Africa, UNHCR worked closely with the African Union to promote accession and ratification of the Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa and to provide guidance to AU Member States on implementation at the national level. UNHCR provided financial and technical support to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for the convening of the first Ministerial Conference on Humanitarian Assistance and Internal Displacement in West Africa, which took place in Abuja in 2011. Activities related to refugee and mixed-migration activities also took place in cooperation with the East African Community and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development.

71. In the Americas, cooperation with the Inter-American Court and Mercosur resulted in an *amicus curiae* brief for the protection of migrant and refugee children. UNHCR joined the Organization of American States (OAS) Department of International Law to organize a course on International Refugee Law for Permanent Missions to the OAS. The Office also participated in the Regional Conference on Migration (Puebla Process) in the Dominican Republic.

72. In the Asia-Pacific region, UNHCR worked closely with the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights, the Asia-Pacific Refugee Rights Network, and the Pacific Immigration Director's Conference on issues such as prevention

and reduction of statelessness; birth registration and documentation; addressing smuggling and human trafficking; and preparedness for natural disasters. The Office worked closely with the Bali Process to establish the Regional Cooperation Framework to address irregular migration and refugee protection in the Asia-Pacific region. Likewise for Central Asia, UNHCR (with support from IOM) cooperated with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy to convene a regional conference on mixed-migration and human trafficking issues, resulting in the Almaty Process addressing mixed migrations in Central Asia.

73. In Europe, UNHCR worked extensively with the European Union (EU), the Council of Europe and the OSCE, including on asylum and migration issues. The Office supported efforts to establish a comprehensive framework for asylum in the 27 EU Member States and a European Asylum Support Office. The European Union remained UNHCR's third-largest donor.

74. In the Middle East and North Africa, UNHCR worked on developing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Gulf Cooperation Council and maintained a strong partnership with the League of Arab States. The Office partnered with the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in organizing the Ministerial Conference on Refugees in the Muslim World, which took place in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan in May 2012.[5] This was the first OIC conference on refugee issues in the Muslim world -- dedicated to enhancing protection and durable solutions through multilateral cooperation -- and resulted in the Ashgabat Declaration, which has been made available as an official document of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

75. UNHCR continued to foster partnership with corporations and foundations. Corporate partners gave UNHCR a record level of support in 2011 -- more than $35 million. The IKEA Foundation was UNHCR's foremost corporate partner, with a landmark three-year pledge of $62 million for assistance to refugees in the Horn of Africa.

76. Goodwill Ambassadors provided invaluable support to the Office, helping to raise awareness, influence action at the political level, and advocate for the rights of persons of concern. Following a decade of service as a UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador, and more than 40 field visits around the world, Angelina Jolie was appointed Special Envoy to the High Commissioner.

VII. Contributions to the Office

77. The generosity and substantial contributions of countries hosting refugees remained fundamental to UNHCR's ability to carry out its mandate. While humanitarian agencies worked to ensure protection and provide essential services, refugees were sustained by the resources and support of their host governments and communities. In 2011, Pakistan remained the country hosting the largest number of refugees, followed by the Islamic Republic of Iran, both countries hosting mainly Afghan refugees. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the third largest hosting country, Iraqi refugees made up the main refugee population. Other important host countries included Kenya and Jordan. To better understand the contributions of refugee-hosting States, the Office convened a Steering Committee on the Cost and Impact of Hosting Refugees, comprised of interested members of the Executive Committee. The Office also commissioned a review of literature on the subject by the African Centre for Migration and Society, which was shared with the Steering Committee in February 2012 and will inform national case studies proposed for 2012-2013.

[5] UNHCR's cooperation with the OIC is led by UNHCR's Regional Bureau for the Middle East and North Africa.

78. The global needs-based budget for 2011 amounted to $3.8 billion, comprising an initial approved budget of $3.3 billion and $500.9 million for six supplementary budgets created during the course of the year. These six supplementary budgets established to address unforeseen emergency situations included: Pakistan ($121.5 million), Kyrgyzstan ($11.5 million), North Africa and the Mediterranean ($110.0 million), Côte d'Ivoire situation ($126.0 million), Sudan situation ($60.6 million), and the Somali displacement crisis ($71.3 million). Despite the persistence of the global financial and economic crisis, the Office continued to receive strong support from its donors, reaching a record $2.1 billion in contributions. Nevertheless, over one-third of the comprehensive needs of persons of concern remained unmet during 2011.

79. UNHCR has continued to diversify its funding sources, including from pooled funds and development sources, the private sector and individual donors. Private donors provided $111 million to UNHCR in 2011, an increase of 53 per cent over 2010. An additional 75,000 donors joined the list of UNHCR's individual donors, bringing the total to nearly 488,000.

VIII. Oversight of programmes

80. Cooperation between internal oversight entities as well as with UN system entities, such as the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and the Joint Inspection Unit, facilitated UNHCR's work. During the reporting period, an Independent Audit and Oversight Committee, as described in Chapter II, was established. A proposal to establish an internal audit service is also being explored.

81. The Inspector General's Office (IGO) within UNHCR continued to work on three core functions: inspections related to the quality of management of operations; investigations of allegations of misconduct by UNHCR personnel; and ad hoc inquiries into violent attacks on UNHCR personnel and operations, and other incidents causing major loss or damage to the Office's integrity, credibility or assets.

82. Over the past year, seven standard inspections of field operations were conducted in Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe. Closure memoranda were issued for 25 standard inspections that had been conducted between 2007 and 2010. The rate of compliance with recommendations made by the IGO's Inspection Service remained high, at 84 per cent.

83. In terms of investigations, the IGO registered 1,137 complaints over the past year. Of these, 782 related to protection and assistance, while 180 (16 per cent), involved allegations of misconduct. The remainder raised matters not directly of concern to the IGO. The 180 complaints of misconduct were carefully assessed and sufficient grounds were found to open 61 cases. Meanwhile 96 cases were closed, 15 of which resulted in referral of a Preliminary Investigation Report to the Department of Human Resources Management (DHRM) for further action, including determination of possible disciplinary measures.

84. Two ad hoc inquiries were also undertaken: one in December 2011, following the violent attack on UNHCR's sub-office in Kandahar, and one in June 2012 to investigate the fatal shooting of a national field safety staff member in a field office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

85. The IGO convened a meeting with nine of UNHCR's key implementing partners (IPs) to explore modalities of cooperating on investigations. UNHCR is revising its standard sub-agreement to include a clause which obligates IPs to report and investigate misconduct and to share findings. Draft guidelines are also being developed for UNHCR-NGO cooperation on investigations.

IX. Conclusion

86. Human mobility, including both cross-border and internal displacement, was a key feature of almost all major world events in 2011 and the first half of 2012, especially in the Middle East and in North, West and East Africa. The goodwill shown by host and donor governments has been remarkable. However, the scale and complexity of forced displacement demand even more support and solidarity from the international community.

87. The commemorations of the key refugee and statelessness instruments in 2011 saw the international community renew its commitment to persons in need of international protection, including through the Ministerial Communiqué and State pledges at the Ministerial Intergovernmental Event in December 2011. Taken as a whole, as reaffirmation of international cooperation and partnership, these pledges pave the way for substantial achievements in protection and solutions for refugees, stateless and internally displaced persons in the decade to come. UNHCR looks forward to the implementation of the pledges made by States and to the international community exercising its shared commitment to address the challenges that lie ahead.

Table I

Refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees (refugees and IDPs), stateless persons and others of concern to UNHCR by country/territory of asylum, end-2011

Country/territory of asylum[1]	REFUGEES					Returned refugees[5]	IDPs protected/ assisted by UNHCR, incl. people in IDP-like situations[6]	Returned IDPs[7]	Stateless persons[8]	Various[9]	Total population of concern
	Refugees[2]	People in refugee-like situations[3]	Total refugees and people in refugee-like situations	*Of whom assisted by UNHCR*	Asylum-seekers (pending cases)[4]						
Afghanistan	66	2,943	3,009	*3,009*	53	71,145	447,547	75,453	-	951,167	1,548,374
Albania	82	-	82	*82*	24	-	-	-	-	-	106
Algeria[10]	94,148	-	94,148	*90,143*	816	-	-	-	-	-	94,964
Angola	16,223	-	16,223	*5,072*	3,167	3,967	-	-	-	-	23,357
Argentina	3,361	-	3,361	*192*	1,217	-	-	-	-	-	4,578
Armenia	2,918	-	2,918	*2,898*	25	-	-	-	11	82,936	85,892
Aruba	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	4
Antigua and Barbuda	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Australia	23,434	-	23,434	-	5,242	-	-	-	-	-	28,676
Austria	47,073	-	47,073	-	24,480	-	-	-	464	-	72,017
Azerbaijan	1,730	-	1,730	*1,730*	48	-	599,192	-	1,741	-	602,711
Bahamas	21	7	28	*27*	14	-	-	-	-	-	42
Bahrain	199	-	199	*199*	160	-	-	-	-	-	359
Bangladesh	29,669	200,000	229,669	*29,669*	2	-	-	-	-	-	229,671
Belarus	595	-	595	*246*	50	-	-	-	7,391	-	8,036
Belgium	22,402	-	22,402	*500*	19,006	-	-	-	697	-	42,105
Belize	78	-	78	*66*	55	-	-	-	-	-	133
Benin	7,217	-	7,217	*7,217*	358	-	-	-	-	-	7,575
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	716	-	716	*154*	18	-	-	-	-	-	734
Bonaire	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6,933	-	6,933	*1,737*	45	449	113,000	365	4,500	52,529	177,821
Botswana	3,312	-	3,312	*3,312*	246	-	-	-	-	-	3,558
Brazil	4,477	-	4,477	*2,772*	4,670	-	-	-	-	-	9,147
British Virgin Islands	2	-	2	*2*	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Brunei Darussalam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20,992	-	20,992
Bulgaria	5,688	-	5,688	-	1,384	-	-	-	-	-	7,072
Burkina Faso	546	-	546	*546*	665	-	-	-	-	-	1,211
Burundi	35,659	-	35,659	*35,659*	10,060	4,378	78,796	-	1,059	250	130,202
Cambodia	64	-	64	*64*	49	-	-	-	-	-	113
Cameroon	100,373	-	100,373	*100,373*	3,298	-	-	-	-	-	103,671
Canada	164,883	-	164,883	-	41,852	-	-	-	-	-	206,735
Cayman Islands	3	-	3	*2*	1	-	-	-	-	-	4
Central African Rep.	16,730	-	16,730	*16,730*	2,448	8,974	105,206	66,545	-	-	199,903
Chad	366,494	-	366,494	*336,153*	16	76	124,000	7,000	-	-	497,735
Chile	1,674	-	1,674	*683*	364	-	-	-	-	-	2,038
China[11]	301,018	-	301,018	*105*	30	-	-	-	-	-	301,048
- Hong Kong SAR, China	152	-	152	*152*	597	-	-	-	1	-	750
- Macao SAR, China	1	-	1	*1*	10	-	-	-	-	-	11
Colombia	219	-	219	*66*	120	24	3,888,309	-	12	-	3,888,684
Comoros	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Congo	141,232	-	141,232	*141,232*	3,011	742	-	-	-	334	145,319
Costa Rica	12,571	7,486	20,057	*15,962*	455	-	-	-	-	-	20,512
Côte d'Ivoire	24,221	-	24,221	*24,221*	667	135,206	126,668	466,808	-	938	754,508
Croatia	782	42	824	*824*	235	439	-	67	1,720	21,016	24,301
Cuba	384	-	384	*347*	2	3	-	-	-	-	389
Curacao	6	-	6	*6*	6	-	-	-	-	-	12
Cyprus[12]	3,503	-	3,503	-	3,059	-	-	-	-	-	6,562
Czech Rep.[13]	2,449	-	2,449	-	909	-	-	-	-	-	3,358
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	152,749	-	152,749	*101,299*	1,136	21,081	1,709,278	822,688	-	-	2,706,932
Denmark	13,399	-	13,399	-	1,427	-	-	-	3,183	-	18,009
Djibouti	20,340	-	20,340	*20,340*	1,905	-	-	-	-	2	22,247
Dominica	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dominican Rep.	595	-	595	*225*	1,785	-	-	-	-	-	2,380
Ecuador	55,092	68,344	123,436	*55,092*	21,558	-	-	-	-	-	144,994
Egypt	95,087	-	95,087	*25,087*	18,938	-	-	-	60	-	114,085
El Salvador	38	-	38	*32*	5	-	-	-	-	-	43
Equatorial Guinea	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eritrea	4,719	-	4,719	*4,685*	7	-	-	-	-	-	4,726
Estonia	50	-	50	-	9	-	-	-	97,749	-	97,808
Ethiopia	288,844	-	288,844	*288,844*	1,347	21	-	-	-	-	290,212
Fiji	7	-	7	*6*	1	-	-	-	-	-	8

Country/territory of asylum[1]	REFUGEES					Returned refugees[5]	IDPs protected/ assisted by UNHCR, incl. people in IDP-like situations[6]	Returned IDPs[7]	Stateless persons[8]	Various[9]	Total population of concern
	Refugees[2]	People in refugee-like situations[3]	Total refugees and people in refugee-like situations	*Of whom assisted by UNHCR*	Asylum-seekers (pending cases)[4]						
Finland	9,175	-	9,175	-	2,283	-	-	-	3,614	-	15,072
France	210,207	-	210,207	-	49,240	-	-	-	1,180	-	260,627
Gabon	1,773	-	1,773	*1,773*	2,368	-	-	-	-	8,651	12,792
Gambia	9,528	-	9,528	*9,527*	26	-	-	-	-	-	9,554
Georgia	462	-	462	*462*	40	-	273,997	-	1,569	-	276,068
Germany	571,685	-	571,685	-	62,680	-	-	-	8,044	16,409	658,818
Ghana	13,588	-	13,588	*13,588*	12,632	-	-	-	-	-	26,220
Greece	1,573	-	1,573	-	43,942	-	-	-	205	-	45,720
Grenada	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Guatemala	147	-	147	*8*	10	2	-	-	-	-	159
Guinea	16,609	-	16,609	*16,609*	605	1	-	-	-	-	17,215
Guinea-Bissau	7,800	-	7,800	*7,798*	91	-	-	-	-	-	7,891
Guyana	7	-	7	*7*	1	-	-	-	-	-	8
Haiti	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	6
Honduras	17	-	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
Hungary	5,106	-	5,106	-	360	-	-	-	89	-	5,555
Iceland	58	-	58	-	81	-	-	-	106	-	245
India	185,118	-	185,118	*16,966*	3,518	1	-	-	-	-	188,637
Indonesia	1,006	-	1,006	*1,006*	3,233	-	-	-	-	-	4,239
Iran, Islamic Rep. of	886,468	-	886,468	*886,468*	445	1	-	-	-	-	886,914
Iraq	35,189	-	35,189	*35,189*	4,196	67,089	1,332,382	193,610	120,000	-	1,752,466
Ireland	8,249	-	8,249	-	5,439	-	-	-	-	-	13,688
Israel	1,116	40,119	41,235	*4,675*	6,460	-	-	-	9	-	47,704
Italy	58,060	-	58,060	-	13,525	-	-	-	1,176	-	72,761
Jamaica	20	-	20	*20*	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
Japan	2,649	-	2,649	*814*	3,698	-	-	-	1,234	-	7,581
Jordan[14]	451,009	-	451,009	*33,206*	4,975	2	-	-	-	-	455,986
Kazakhstan	616	-	616	*606*	70	-	-	-	7,337	3,682	11,705
Kenya	566,487	-	566,487	*566,487*	35,271	69	300,000	-	20,000	-	921,827
Kuwait	335	-	335	*335*	1,118	-	-	-	93,000	-	94,453
Kyrgyzstan[15]	595	5,500	6,095	*2,095*	408	-	163,900	8,100	32,300	-	210,803
Lao People's Dem. Rep.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia	95	-	95	-	231	-	-	-	312,362	-	312,688
Lebanon	8,845	145	8,990	*8,990*	1,736	-	-	-	-	4,840	15,566
Lesotho	34	-	34	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	37
Liberia	128,285	8	128,293	*128,293*	574	1,768	-	-	-	1,850	132,485
Libya	7,540	2,590	10,130	*10,130*	2,894	148,951	93,565	458,047	-	-	713,587
Liechtenstein	94	-	94	-	57	-	-	-	2	-	153
Lithuania	821	-	821	-	77	-	-	-	3,480	-	4,378
Luxembourg	2,855	-	2,855	-	1,694	-	-	-	177	-	4,726
Madagascar	9	-	9	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	11
Malawi	6,308	-	6,308	*6,308*	10,545	-	-	-	-	-	16,853
Malaysia	85,754	926	86,680	*86,680*	10,937	-	-	-	40,001	80,000	217,618
Mali	15,624	-	15,624	*15,624*	2,497	-	-	-	-	-	18,121
Malta	6,952	-	6,952	-	1,457	-	-	-	-	-	8,409
Mauritania	535	26,000	26,535	*535*	282	1,367	-	-	-	-	28,184
Mauritius	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mexico	1,677	-	1,677	*240*	631	-	-	-	5	-	2,313
Micronesia (Federated States	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monaco	37	-	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
Mongolia	1	-	1	*1*	5	-	-	-	292	-	298
Montenegro	12,874	-	12,874	*12,874*	38	-	-	-	4,312	3,938	21,162
Montserrat	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	5
Morocco	736	-	736	*736*	615	-	-	-	-	-	1,351
Mozambique	4,079	-	4,079	*2,404*	9,602	5	-	-	-	-	13,686
Myanmar	-	-	-	-	-	-	339,200	-	808,075	-	1,147,275
Namibia	6,049	-	6,049	*6,049*	928	41	-	-	-	-	7,018
Nepal[16]	70,268	2,386	72,654	*55,268*	928	-	-	-	800,000	541	874,123
Netherlands	74,598	-	74,598	-	10,420	-	-	-	2,005	-	87,023
New Zealand	1,934	-	1,934	-	240	-	-	-	-	-	2,174

Country/territory of asylum[1]	REFUGEES					Returned refugees[5]	IDPs protected/ assisted by UNHCR, incl. people in IDP-like situations[6]	Returned IDPs[7]	Stateless persons[8]	Various[9]	Total population of concern
	Refugees[2]	People in refugee-like situations[3]	Total refugees and people in refugee-like situations	*Of whom assisted by UNHCR*	Asylum-seekers (pending cases)[4]						
Nicaragua	86	-	86	*40*	6	-	-	-	-	-	92
Niger	302	-	302	*302*	123	-	-	-	-	-	425
Nigeria	8,806	-	8,806	*8,806*	1,529	-	-	-	-	-	10,335
Norway	40,691	-	40,691	-	11,153	-	-	-	2,773	-	54,617
Occupied Palestinian Territory	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oman	83	-	83	*83*	43	-	-	-	-	-	126
Pakistan	1,702,700	-	1,702,700	*1,702,700*	1,624	3,449	452,932	620,362	-	-	2,781,067
Palau	1	-	1	*1*	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
Panama	2,262	15,000	17,262	*4,055*	794	-	-	-	3	-	18,059
Papua New Guinea	4,810	4,567	9,377	*2,559*	1	-	-	-	-	-	9,378
Paraguay	124	-	124	*21*	9	-	-	-	-	-	133
Peru	1,144	-	1,144	*113*	494	-	-	-	-	-	1,638
Philippines	125	-	125	*19*	58	-	159,465	-	-	68	159,716
Poland	15,847	-	15,847	-	2,886	-	-	-	763	-	19,496
Portugal	408	-	408	-	214	-	-	-	31	-	653
Qatar	80	-	80	*80*	49	-	-	-	1,200	-	1,329
Rep. of Korea	401	-	401	*21*	1,169	-	-	-	179	-	1,749
Rep. of Moldova	146	-	146	*146*	49	-	-	-	2,073	-	2,268
Romania	1,005	-	1,005	*121*	753	-	-	-	275	-	2,033
Russian Federation[17]	3,914	-	3,914	*2,727*	962	41	28,450	166	178,000	10,246	221,779
Rwanda	55,325	-	55,325	*55,325*	296	8,524	-	-	-	-	64,145
Saint Kitts and Nevis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Saint Lucia	2	-	2	*2*	3	-	-	-	-	-	5
Saint Maarten	3	-	3	*3*	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Saint Vincent and the Grenadi	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sao Tome and Principe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Saudi Arabia	572	27	599	*599*	80	-	-	-	70,000	-	70,679
Senegal	20,644	-	20,644	*20,644*	2,263	-	-	-	-	-	22,907
Serbia (and Kosovo: S/RES/12	70,707	-	70,707	*70,705*	399	392	228,215	845	8,500	519	309,577
Sierra Leone	8,092	-	8,092	*8,079*	64	-	-	-	-	-	8,156
Singapore	3	-	3	*3*	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Slovakia	546	-	546	-	185	-	-	-	63	46	840
Slovenia	142	-	142	-	103	-	-	-	-	-	245
Somalia	2,099	-	2,099	*2,099*	6,016	212	1,356,845	-	-	11	1,365,183
South Africa[18]	57,899	-	57,899	-	219,368	-	-	-	-	-	277,267
South Sudan[19]	105,023	-	105,023	*99,958*	88	906	560,161	-	-	-	666,178
Spain	4,228	-	4,228	-	2,670	-	-	-	36	-	6,934
Sri Lanka	188	-	188	*188*	204	2,365	138,401	144,577	-	-	285,735
Sudan[20]	113,439	25,976	139,415	*82,315*	6,912	50,074	2,422,520	279,325	-	-	2,898,246
Suriname	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Swaziland	759	-	759	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	759
Sweden	86,615	-	86,615	-	18,138	-	-	-	10,344	-	115,097
Switzerland	50,416	-	50,416	-	16,915	-	-	-	54	-	67,385
Syrian Arab Rep.[21]	755,445	-	755,445	*105,699*	1,830	-	-	-	231,000	-	988,275
Tajikistan	3,323	-	3,323	*2,128*	2,027	1	-	-	2,300	-	7,651
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	801	329	1,130	*1,130*	389	-	-	-	1,154	-	2,673
Thailand	89,253	-	89,253	*89,253*	13,357	-	-	-	506,197	-	608,807
Timor-Leste	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Togo	19,270	-	19,270	*9,272*	377	76	-	-	-	-	19,723
Tonga	2	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
Trinidad and Tobago	22	-	22	*22*	20	-	-	-	-	-	42
Tunisia	3,048	1,049	4,097	*4,021*	555	5	-	-	-	-	4,657
Turkey	14,465	-	14,465	*14,465*	10,964	-	-	-	780	9,576	35,785
Turkmenistan	59	-	59	*59*	-	-	-	-	11,000	-	11,059
Uganda	139,448	-	139,448	*139,448*	23,453	20	29,776	95,822	-	-	288,519
Ukraine	2,676	500	3,176	*298*	3,622	-	-	-	39,817	-	46,615
United Arab Emirates	677	-	677	*677*	45	-	-	-	-	-	722
United Kingdom	193,510	-	193,510	-	15,170	-	-	-	205	-	208,885
United Rep. of Tanzania	131,243	-	131,243	*109,016*	705	-	-	-	-	162,256	294,204
United States[22]	264,763	-	264,763	-	11,721	-	-	-	-	-	276,484
Uruguay	174	-	174	*88*	51	-	-	-	-	-	225
Uzbekistan	214	-	214	*214*	-	-	-	-	-	-	214
Vanuatu	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Venezuela (Bolivarian Rep. of	2,022	200,000	202,022	*21,125*	17,369	-	-	-	-	-	219,391
Viet Nam	990	-	990	-	-	21	-	-	10,200	-	11,211
Yemen	214,740	-	214,740	*214,740*	5,878	-	347,295	6,024	-	-	573,937
Zambia	45,632	-	45,632	*31,508*	1,021	-	-	-	-	-	46,653
Zimbabwe	4,561	-	4,561	*4,561*	777	19	54,278	-	-	40	59,675
Various	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	9,800,862	603,944	10,404,806	6,058,972	895,284	531,907	15,473,378	3,245,804	3,477,101	1,411,848	35,440,128

Country/territory of asylum[1]	REFUGEES					Returned refugees[5]	IDPs protected/ assisted by UNHCR, incl. people in IDP-like situations[6]	Returned IDPs[7]	Stateless persons[8]	Various[9]	Total population of concern
	Refugees[2]	People in refugee-like situations[3]	Total refugees and people in refugee-like situations	*Of whom assisted by UNHCR*	Asylum-seekers (pending cases)[4]						
UNHCR-Bureaux											
Central Africa-Great Lakes	635,084	-	635,084	561,407	23,322	43,699	1,893,280	889,233	1,059	171,491	3,657,168
East and Horn of Africa	1,606,893	25,976	1,632,869	1,540,329	75,164	51,378	4,793,302	382,147	20,000	13	6,954,873
Southern Africa	144,865	-	144,865	59,214	245,658	4,032	54,278	-	-	41	448,874
Western Africa	280,532	8	280,540	270,526	22,471	137,051	126,668	466,808	-	2,788	1,036,326
Asia and Pacific	3,390,889	216,322	3,607,211	2,880,055	47,912	76,983	1,701,445	848,492	2,240,108	1,035,458	9,557,609
Middle East and North Africa	1,869,384	69,930	1,739,314	535,124	50,670	217,414	1,773,242	657,681	515,269	4,840	4,958,430
Europe	1,556,622	871	1,557,493	110,945	326,837	1,321	1,242,354	1,443	700,645	197,217	4,027,810
Americas	516,593	290,837	807,430	101,372	103,250	29	3,888,309	-	20	-	4,799,038
Various/unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	9,800,862	603,944	10,404,806	6,058,972	895,284	531,907	15,473,378	3,245,804	3,477,101	1,411,848	35,440,128
UN major regions											
Africa	2,868,468	55,623	2,924,091	2,562,128	390,715	386,483	6,961,093	2,196,235	21,119	174,333	13,054,069
Asia	4,852,089	252,046	5,104,115	3,301,516	83,130	144,074	4,254,311	1,048,126	2,759,418	1,132,812	14,525,986
Europe	1,533,544	871	1,534,415	91,390	312,701	1,321	369,665	1,443	696,544	104,703	3,020,792
Latin America and the Caribbe	86,947	290,837	377,784	101,372	49,677	29	3,888,309	-	20	-	4,315,819
Northern America	429,646	-	429,646	-	53,573	-	-	-	-	-	483,219
Oceania	30,188	4,567	34,755	2,566	5,488	-	-	-	-	-	40,243
Various	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	9,800,862	603,944	10,404,806	6,058,972	895,284	531,907	15,473,378	3,245,804	3,477,101	1,411,848	35,440,128

Notes

The data are generally provided by Governments, based on their own definitions and methods of data collection.

A dash (-) indicates that the value is zero, not available or not applicable.

[1] Country or territory of asylum or residence.

[2] Persons recognized as refugees under the 1951 UN Convention/1967 Protocol, the 1969 OAU Convention, in accordance with the UNHCR Statute, persons granted a complementary form of protection and those granted temporary protection. In the absence of Government figures, UNHCR has estimated the refugee population in 24 industrialized countries based on 10 years of individual refugee recognition.

[3] This category is descriptive in nature and includes groups of persons who are outside their country or territory of origin and who face protection risks similar to those of refugees, but for whom refugee status has, for practical or other reasons, not been ascertained.

[4] Persons whose application for asylum or refugee status is pending at any stage in the asylum procedure.

[5] Refugees who have returned to their place of origin during the calendar year. Source: country of origin and asylum.

[6] Persons who are displaced within their country and to whom UNHCR extends protection and/or assistance. It also includes people in IDP-like situations. This category is descriptive in nature and includes groups of persons who are inside their country of nationality or habitual residence and who face protection risks similar to those of IDPs but who, for practical or other reasons, could not be reported as such.

[7] IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR who have returned to their place of origin during the calendar year.

[8] Refers to persons who are not considered nationals by any State under the operation of its laws. This category covers *de jure* and *de facto* stateless persons, including persons who are unable to establish their nationality. See annex table 7 for footnotes (http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/1%WRD-table-7.xls).

[9] Refers to individuals who do not necessarily fall directly into any of the other groups but to whom UNHCR may extend its protection and/or assistance services. These activities might be based on humanitarian or other special grounds.

[10] According to the Government of Algeria, there are an estimated 165,000 Sahrawi refugees in the Tindouf camps.

[11] The 300,000 Vietnamese refugees are well integrated and in practice receive protection from the Government of China.

[12] UNHCR's assistance activities for IDPs in Cyprus ended in 1999. Visit the website of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) for further information.

[13] Refugee population refers to the end of 2010. Asylum-seekers (pending cases) refers to 565 undecided cases at the first instance at the end of 2011 and 344 undecided cases on appeal at the end of 2010 (no updated data available).

[14] Refugee figure for Iraqis in Jordan is a Government estimate. UNHCR has registered and is assisting 32,200 Iraqis.

[15] IDP figure in Kyrgyzstan includes 150,500 people who are in an IDP-like situation.

[16] The figure of 800,000 persons is an estimated figure of individuals who lack citizenship certificates in Nepal, while a Nepalese individual cannot be regarded stateless only on the grounds that he/she has not obtained the citizenship certificate. The exact number as well, as the exact reasons for not having the certificate, are currently not known. In 1995, the Government of Nepal sponsored the Dhanapati Commission, which concluded that approximately 3.4 million Nepalis were lacking citizenship certificates. A Government-initiated task force then distributed 2.6 million certificates in 2007. The estimate of 800,000 was arrived at by deducting 2.6 million (number of certificates issues) from the original estimated figure of 3.4 million. The Government of Nepal is also supporting access to citizenship certificates through mobile registration teams organized in some districts, in the context of a voter registration exercise. This should also help determine the number of people without citizenship certificates and propose concrete measures to address the issue.

[17] The figure of 178,000 stateless persons is based on the number of persons who self-identified as stateless in the 2010 census and is subject to further discussion/verification with the Government.

[18] Asylum-seekers (pending cases) refers to an estimated 63,000 undecided cases at first instance and 156,400 undecided cases on appeal.

[19] IDP figure in South Sudan includes 209,700 people who are in an IDP-like situation.

[20] IDP figure in Sudan includes 83,100 people who are in an IDP-like situation.

[21] Refugee figure for Iraqis in the Syrian Arab Republic is a Government estimate. UNHCR has registered and is assisting 103,200 Iraqis.

[22] Asylum-seekers (pending cases) excludes individuals pending a decision on their asylum claim with the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

Source: UNHCR/Governments.

Table II

UNHCR budget and expenditure in 2011

Subregion		Refugee programme Pillar 1	Stateless programme Pillar 2	Reintegration projects Pillar 3	IDP projects Pillar 4	Total
Central Africa and the Great Lakes	Budget	211,765,910	4,243,123	107,347,488	70,309,311	393,665,832
	Expenditure	124,566,405	1,855,346	22,560,708	24,365,664	173,348,123
East and Horn of Africa	Budget	830,921,869	9,957,503	11,284,311	219,753,256	1,071,916,939
	Expenditure	420,793,532	3,449,757	6,698,150	96,990,727	527,932,166
West Africa	Budget	173,311,293	5,043,153	19,448,039	29,072,575	226,875,060
	Expenditure	91,657,247	2,035,097	9,560,808	6,505,169	109,758,321
Southern Africa	Budget	84,802,049	2,225,653	2,528,102	4,432,293	93,988,097
	Expenditure	43,203,158	1,262,126	421,090	1,816,898	46,703,272
North Africa	Budget	134,295,541	0	0	10,848,957	145,144,498
	Expenditure	87,616,984	0	0	2,565,042	90,182,026
Middle East	Budget	302,138,453	9,125,605	65,062,863	130,076,739	506,403,660
	Expenditure	188,012,882	2,624,737	22,644,704	58,950,744	272,233,067
South-West Asia	Budget	129,867,863	815,199	67,444,591	175,612,790	373,740,443
	Expenditure	98,519,013	559,758	53,174,972	122,468,855	274,722,598
Central Asia	Budget	9,071,299	3,359,513	0	10,732,964	23,163,776
	Expenditure	6,265,606	2,441,548	0	4,521,867	13,229,021
South Asia	Budget	36,295,884	1,501,952	0	17,498,959	55,296,795
	Expenditure	22,802,926	867,767	0	9,467,396	33,138,089
South-East Asia	Budget	60,668,451	14,736,347	377,372	14,367,668	90,149,838
	Expenditure	35,566,671	8,354,763	153,242	7,874,513	51,949,189
East Asia and the Pacific	Budget	15,405,017	1,169,397	0	460,000	17,034,414
	Expenditure	11,710,261	798,244	0	444,056	12,952,561
Eastern Europe	Budget	49,303,098	4,343,496	2,265,525	28,709,429	84,621,548
	Expenditure	33,092,644	2,432,476	529,092	14,627,045	50,681,257
South-Eastern Europe	Budget	27,855,110	4,495,037	13,679,143	30,236,719	76,266,009
	Expenditure	18,254,825	3,255,945	5,636,745	10,184,034	37,331,549
Central Europe	Budget	9,695,418	648,188	0	0	10,343,606
	Expenditure	7,835,611	502,769	0	0	8,338,380
Northern, Western and Southern Europe	Budget	38,704,414	2,092,148	0	0	40,796,562
	Expenditure	30,005,836	1,864,045	0	0	31,869,881
North America and the Caribbean	Budget	8,774,165	2,372,077	0	6,477,459	17,623,701
	Expenditure	7,445,300	1,106,965	0	1,863,358	10,415,623
Latin America	Budget	52,220,811	188,018	0	32,567,240	84,976,069
	Expenditure	30,698,376	125,344	0	16,209,445	47,033,165
Global Programmes	Budget	188,162,479	0	0	0	188,162,479
	Expenditure	180,456,496	0	0	0	180,456,496
Headquarters[1]	Budget	201,057,316	0	0	0	201,057,316
	Expenditure	199,234,589	0	0	0	199,234,589
Subtotal programmed activities	Budget	2,884,318,440	66,516,490	388,437,434	781,156,339	4,701,226,642
	Expenditure	1,637,739,941	33,534,887	131,379,511	378,854,813	2,171,509,373
Operational Reserve	Budget	93,381,549	0	0	0	93,381,549
NAM Reserve[2]	Budget	15,031,152	0	0	0	15,031,152
Support costs related to NAM	Budget	68,238	0	0	0	68,238
Junior Professional Officers	Budget	12,000,000	0	0	0	12,000,000
	Expenditure	9,589,954	0	0	0	9,589,954
Total	Budget	2,884,787,379	66,516,490	388,437,434	781,156,339	4,121,703,581
	Expenditure	1,647,329,716	33,534,887	131,379,511	378,854,813	2,191,099,327

[1] Includes allocations from the UN Regular Budget as follows: USD 44,058,600 (budget) and USD 44,058,600 (expenditure).

[2] "New or additional activities - mandate-related" Reserve

A/67/13

United Nations

Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

1 January-31 December 2011

General Assembly
Official Records
Sixty-seventh Session
Supplement No. 13

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Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

1 January-31 December 2011

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Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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Letter of transmittal

28 August 2012

I have the honour to submit to the General Assembly my report on the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for 2011. The report is submitted in compliance with paragraph 21 of Assembly resolution 302 (IV) and paragraph 8 of resolution 1315 (XIII). It describes the Agency's operational context, the principal legal matters affecting UNRWA during the reporting period, the main developments in the Agency's reform process, operational priorities by field of operation, and the Agency's financial situation. It also presents programme objectives within the framework of the Agency's human development goals, in line with its medium-term strategy for 2010-2015.

The Advisory Commission, which with the accession of Luxembourg in 2012 comprises 25 member States and three observer delegations, endorsed the draft of the report during its June 2012 session. The Commission's ongoing engagement and constructive advice continues to be of value to me and to UNRWA senior management. In accordance with usual practice, I have also shared a draft of the report with representatives of the Government of Israel.

I take this opportunity to update the General Assembly briefly on key developments in 2012. We are gravely concerned about the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, which has claimed the lives of a large and growing number of civilians. The conflict is directly affecting an increasing number of Palestine refugee communities with serious consequences for their well-being and safety, including in Dera'a and Yarmouk, where violence in mid-2012 caused displacement and loss of life. Numbering approximately 500,000, the Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic have historically enjoyed social inclusion in their host communities and civic and socioeconomic rights on a par with their Syrian hosts, and until February this year, they were largely spared the worst of the violence. However, as the conflict has intensified and spread, Palestine refugees' vulnerability has deepened, their communities have been destabilized, their exposure to violence has increased and their futures have been rendered uncertain. UNRWA is also very concerned about its staff, whose safety and security is of the Agency's utmost concern. We have called on all parties to take steps to ensure the protection of the Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic, and to ensure the Agency's unhindered access and the supply of essential goods to refugee communities.

UNRWA faces other unique challenges, in particular in the occupied Palestinian territory. As reported last year, the Israeli authorities eased the blockade of the Gaza Strip in June 2010 with positive repercussions on the Agency's operations. Between then and July 2012, 86 UNRWA projects (for a total amount of $337 million) were approved, aimed at reconstructing part of the Gaza Strip's devastated and crumbling infrastructure, including refugee housing, schools and

health clinics. As at 30 July 2012, the Agency was implementing projects valued at $189 million, for 35 schools and more than 1,900 shelters. Despite progress with reconstruction, UNRWA is deeply concerned that delays in further approving the large number of planned projects and constraints in the importation of construction and other necessary materials will adversely affect key aspects of reconstruction, including for refugees who have waited years for their demolished shelters to be rebuilt.

Vital to the social and economic recovery of the Gaza Strip is the establishment of normal conditions of trade and commerce, and of movement for its 1.7 million people, who have endured years of confinement en masse. Its recovery and growth will be possible only with the lifting of the blockade that indiscriminately suffocates its economy and people.

As in the Gaza Strip, UNRWA is the main provider of basic services to the refugees in the West Bank and faces extraordinary challenges in achieving its mission to promote the highest possible standards of human development for the refugees. Wide-ranging movement restrictions, settlements and their expansion, and the impact of the barrier on communities along its entire length conspire to limit development in all its forms.

Despite the preceding and other challenges, the Agency remains committed to improving the quality and effectiveness of services, with good results. We are engaged in ambitious reforms to that end, working closely with our host and donor partners to help us develop and implement them. The reforms are essential to helping to equip the refugees with the twenty-first-century skills required to achieve a decent standard of living, and to better assist the most vulnerable through interventions which not only mitigate poverty but also help them to escape the trap of poverty. We are therefore concerned about funding inadequacies that pose a risk to UNRWA, its reforms and — most seriously — the core services that those reforms seek to improve, and on which the refugees rely. The Agency appreciates that the continuing global financial crisis has constrained humanitarian and development assistance globally. Within the context of a resource mobilization strategy that redoubles efforts to broaden the Agency's donor base, we continue to appeal to all stakeholders to provide the support we need to fulfil our General Assembly mandate to promote the human development of the refugees.

The challenges facing UNRWA are made even greater as a result of the profound changes sweeping the region, and the continuing uncertainty about the future that plagues Palestine refugee communities. Amidst instability, the certainty of support by the international community remains a pillar of hope for the refugees, who turn to UNRWA in growing numbers for basic services essential to their human development. The well-being of the refugees, and ensuring UNRWA's effectiveness in contributing to it, remain a shared commitment of the international community pending a just and durable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in all its aspects, including the refugee question.

(*Signed*) Filippo **Grandi**
Commissioner-General

Letter dated 19 June 2012 from the Chair of the Advisory Commission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to the Commissioner-General of the Agency

At its regular session, held at the Dead Sea, Jordan, on 18 and 19 June 2012, the Advisory Commission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) considered the draft annual report on UNRWA activities and operations, covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2011, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forthcoming sixth-seventh session.

The Commission commends UNRWA for its efforts to continue delivering its programmes and services to Palestine refugees in its fields of operation and underscores the vital role of UNRWA in contributing to regional stability until a just solution is reached, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions (General Assembly resolutions 194 (III) and 302 (IV)).

The Commission remains gravely concerned about the volatile situation in the Gaza Strip and the ensuing loss of life. The restrictions on access imposed by the Israeli authorities along with outbreaks of violence affect disproportionately the refugees, contributing to increased need for UNRWA services. Although projects for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip amounting to $167 million were approved, the Commission notes that UNRWA continues to face challenges in receiving approvals for remaining projects for thousands of refugees awaiting shelter. The Commission emphasizes the need for unhindered access for all goods necessary for the Agency to carry out its humanitarian and human development activities and for the economic and social recovery of communities gravely affected by the regime of movement restrictions.

The Commission notes with deep concern that the separation barrier, closures and other restrictions on movement, demolitions and destruction of homes and economic assets by the Israeli authorities in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including those with respect to East Jerusalem, continue to cause hardship for the affected population. These restrictions hinder economic development, specifically access to sources of employment and essential goods and services, as well as the ability of UNRWA to carry out its mandated tasks. The Commission calls for the removal of all Israeli restrictions regarding the movement of UNRWA staff and goods in line with the November 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access concluded between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, and the 1967 Comay-Michelmore agreement between UNRWA and the Government of Israel.

The Commission calls on all parties to fully respect United Nations resolutions and international law, including international humanitarian law.

The Commission remains concerned about the lack of Agency access to, and information on, its staff detained by relevant authorities.

The Commission notes the decline in living conditions for Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011, especially those who are in close proximity to areas experiencing violence, and the resulting increase in their needs. The Commission welcomes the Agency's efforts to continue to provide services under difficult circumstances in coordination and cooperation with the Government. The Commission expresses its concern about the safety of refugees and stresses the special vulnerability of refugees in close proximity to areas experiencing violence.

The Commission notes the Agency's continued efforts to address the special needs of Palestine refugees in Lebanon. The Commission remains concerned about the security of UNRWA staff and notes the efforts of UNRWA and the host Government to prevent further attacks on UNRWA staff. It stresses the need for sustained efforts to help refugees in Lebanon expand their opportunities and improve their living conditions without prejudice to other rights they enjoy as refugees.

The Commission notes the Agency's completion of projects in the first phase of reconstruction of Nahr El-Bared camp and funding shortfalls that continue to challenge the provision of assistance to those displaced following its destruction in 2007.

In Jordan, which hosts approximately 40 per cent of the refugees registered with UNRWA, the Commission stresses the need to ensure services delivered to the refugees are optimal in scope and quality. The Commission encourages the continued and close cooperation between the Government and the Agency.

The Commission restates its view that the enduring hardships of Palestine refugees underscore the critical role of UNRWA. The Commission remains concerned with the long-term structural underfunding of the Agency, which has had an impact on service delivery. The Commission acknowledges and greatly appreciates the long-term support of major donors for UNRWA operations. At the same time, the Commission recognizes the efforts made by UNRWA through its resource mobilization strategy to deepen and diversify its donor base and further develop its resource mobilization efforts. It urges the international donor community as a whole to mobilize the resources needed, particularly for the Agency's General Fund, to secure proper service delivery.

Within the Advisory Commission forum, the Agency is encouraged to continue its pursuit of sustainable, efficient and relevant quality services to Palestine refugees, to reach its human development goals. The Advisory Commission encourages UNRWA to continue its dialogue with stakeholders to further clarify budget issues, its decision-making process, and resource allocation methodology. Greater understanding and improved consultation will enable the Commission to provide more adequate and timely advice to UNRWA regarding its operations, programmes and key decisions. Further clarity would assist UNRWA in being more persuasive vis-à-vis traditional and new donors when fundraising.

The Commission notes and remains concerned about the sharp decline in funding for the Agency's annual emergency appeals for the occupied Palestinian territory between 2009 and 2011 as well as for the "restoring dignity" appeal for Nahr El-Bared.

The Commission welcomes the Agency's reforms of its programmes in health and education under the sustaining change plan, and improved effectiveness in delivering services to refugees in cooperation with host countries. The Commission urges UNRWA to continue the dialogue with stakeholders in the implementation of those reforms and to continue to incorporate greater efficiencies in programming. For the reform of the relief and social services programme, the Commission notes the need for further consultations and dialogue with stakeholders. The Commission also welcomes the findings of the external evaluation of the Agency's organizational development and its efforts to implement the recommendations. The Commission further notes the strides UNRWA has made in the introduction of an enterprise resource planning system and the support the Agency requires to complete its implementation; the development of new communications tools; and the introduction of more transparent and detailed financial reporting, including the adoption of the new accounting system, which is compliant with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

The Commission highly commends the support by host countries and host authorities and donors to the work and activities of the Agency.

(*Signed*) Mahmood **Aqrabawi**
Chair of the Advisory Commission

Chapter I
Contextual overview

A. Political, economic and security developments

1. In 2011, the Palestine refugees in the five fields of operation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) experienced varying political, economic and security conditions against the background of events in the Middle East and North Africa. The attention paid to the events of 2011 brought the lack of progress in the Middle East peace process and the issue of Palestine refugees — already vulnerable and suffering the effects of over six decades of displacement and dispossession — into stark relief. In all five fields of operation — Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, and the West Bank and the Gaza Strip — the refugees had to contend with the impact of the continuing global economic downturn and persistent funding shortfalls which precluded the Agency from meeting their basic needs. Their enjoyment of rights under international law remained — in many cases — limited or absent, and can only be addressed through a peaceful resolution to the conflict and a just and durable solution to the refugees' plight, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions.

2. The situation in the occupied Palestinian territory was characterized by a continuing political impasse, conflict and restrictions on rights and opportunities for Palestinians, including refugees. The blockade of the Gaza Strip, eased but not lifted since June 2010, had a significant impact on all aspects of Gazans' lives, two thirds of whom are Palestine refugees, while in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Israeli policies and practices continued to restrict progress.

3. In the Gaza Strip, the situation remained dire. Poverty remained high, with 54 per cent of the population food insecure and over 75 per cent, or 1 million Gazans, dependent on international aid.[1] Within that context, the Gaza Strip did experience an economic recovery in 2011, with real annual gross domestic product (GDP) growing approximately 23 per cent and the broad unemployment rate dropping from 44 per cent in 2010 to 33 per cent in late 2011.[2] Nevertheless, those gains were driven in large part by the "tunnel economy" — trade conducted by means of the tunnels extending under the Gaza Strip — rather than through production and trade to and from the Gaza Strip. Although measures introduced by the Government of Israel to relax restrictions on consumer goods also helped, continued restrictions on certain imports and the ban on exports to the Gaza Strip's traditional markets of Israel and the West Bank prevented meaningful and sustainable economic development. The UNRWA three-year, $661 million reconstruction plan saw further improvement in 2011. Following lengthy and detailed negotiations with the Government of Israel, the Agency was able to import construction materials for a number of UNRWA projects.

[1] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip", Fact sheet (October 2011).

[2] See UNRWA, "Socio-economic developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2010" (2011). Rates under the relaxed definition of unemployment, which considers discouraged workers as unemployed and is considered more relevant in contexts with high labour force frustration and low participation rates, such as that of the Gaza Strip. Unemployment rates under the more restricted International Labour Organization (ILO) definition decreased from 38 per cent in 2010 to 28 per cent in the third quarter of 2011.

Of the total portfolio of projects to be constructed, projects worth $167 million were approved in 2011, all during the first half of the year. Approval of housing projects remained urgent, as thousands of refugees were awaiting shelters, some living in substandard and unhealthy conditions for many years. Delays in approvals and cumbersome and costly procedures for the import and use of construction materials, as well as the use of only a single crossing point, were all challenges to the Agency's ability to meet such needs. The Agency continued to work closely with the Israeli authorities in attempting to find solutions to expedite those processes. In 2011, access for people through the Rafah crossing with Egypt improved in comparison with 2010.

4. In reference to security, the situation in the Gaza Strip remained volatile, with hundreds of rockets, mortars, grad missiles and other projectiles launched from the Gaza Strip towards southern Israel. Israeli forces conducted hundreds[3] of military operations against the Gaza Strip, including incursions, air strikes, border firings and firings at sea, including towards fishermen. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 108 Palestinians were killed in 2011 and 467 were injured in conflict-related violence, as compared with 72 killed and 286 injured in 2010.[4] Three Israelis were killed and a number of others injured from weapons launched from the Gaza Strip. In May, Fatah and Hamas signed a reconciliation agreement that called for the establishment of a temporary government and parliamentary elections within a year. In October an exchange agreed between Hamas and Israel resulted in the release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit and 477 Palestinian prisoners. A further 550 Palestinians were released in December as part of the same agreement.

5. During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to characterize the situation in the West Bank as a protection crisis with humanitarian consequences, in which vulnerability remained high for large parts of the refugee population. A number of factors contributed to that situation, including the following: controls on the economy and on the movement of goods, services and people; impediments to construction and infrastructure investment; the expansion of settlements and the associated humanitarian impacts and violence; the construction of the barrier and resulting loss of Palestinian land, with access restrictions to land for farming and herding; and the destruction of houses, water and livestock. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported in September 2011 that there were, on average, 121 staffed checkpoints obstructing Palestinian movement in the West Bank, and an additional 489 ad hoc "flying" checkpoints obstructed movement around the West Bank each month (on average).[5] In December 2011, Israel finished the construction of a new terminal at Shu'fat camp, which serves as a crossing point between East Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank, furthering access restrictions. Thirteen Palestinians were killed and 1,643 injured in the West Bank in conflict-related incidents in the reporting period. In the same period, 12 Israeli civilians were killed and 124 injured.[6]

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[3] According to estimates by the Department of Safety and Security.

[4] Thirty-six of the deaths and 54 of the injuries were tunnel-related. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The Monthly Humanitarian Monitor* (January 2012).

[5] The United Nations estimates that there were, additionally, an average of 435 unstaffed obstacles throughout the West Bank. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The Monthly Humanitarian Monitor* (September 2011).

[6] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The Monthly Humanitarian Monitor* (January 2012).

6. The economy in the West Bank grew during 2011, and GDP per capita data for the third quarter of 2011 showed an increase of 5.5 per cent compared with the same period in 2010. The unemployment rate in the West Bank for the third quarter of 2011 was 19.7 per cent, compared with 20.1 per cent during the third quarter 2010;[7] however refugee unemployment and poverty remained higher.

7. Since the outbreak of protests in the Syrian Arab Republic in March 2011 and the subsequent conflict, living conditions for Palestine refugees in that country have deteriorated significantly. The devaluation of the Syrian pound has had a negative impact on their livelihoods, exacerbated by a rise in the cost of basic commodities and services and by a contraction of the wage labour market upon which a large proportion of Palestinians depend. The informal employment market has collapsed, and there are shortages of electricity, fuel and heating oil. While food remains available in most Palestinian residential areas, inflation and reduced household incomes mean food insecurity is growing. In addition, levels of conflict, violence and criminality have risen, leading to problems with access to services and high levels of stress and uncertainty among the refugee population. Owing to the conflict, UNRWA services have been temporarily interrupted, and installations were temporarily closed in Dera'a, Douma, Hama, Homs and Khan Dunoun in 2011. A military operation in Latakia camp forced the displacement of almost all of the camp-dwelling Palestine refugee population and the closure of UNRWA installations from 14 to 21 August 2011. Although the camps have not been directly affected by the conflict, refugee populations still form a particularly vulnerable group owing to their generally depressed economic status and to the proximity of so many of the refugee camps to areas of unrest and violence. The number of conflict-related Palestinian fatalities in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2011 remains unconfirmed; however, reports in the media and from other independent sources refer to a variety of figures, the highest estimate amounting to 260.

8. In Lebanon, living conditions for Palestine refugees remain abject. They suffer high unemployment and poverty rates. The camps and gatherings lack adequate basic infrastructure, including roads, electricity and water, and housing is frequently unhealthy and unsafe. In January, the unity Government of Saad Hariri in Lebanon fell, leading to five months of political uncertainty, causing delays in decisions on refugee issues, including the right of Palestine refugees to work, and adding to the challenges concerning the reconstruction of the Nahr el-Bared camp. In June, Prime Minister Najib Mikati formed a new Government, which noted its role in guaranteeing certain rights for the Palestinians and called for full funding of UNRWA operations and the reconstruction of the Nahr el-Bared camp. In May, tens of thousands of Palestinians participated in a rally at Lebanon's southern borders. Seven Palestinians were killed and over one hundred wounded, reportedly by gunfire fr[illegible] Israeli forces, when the demonstrators ran towards the border fence. Similar demonstrations took place in other parts of the region on the same day with the in[illegible]tional community calling for calm and restraint.

9. [illegible] Jordan, in 2011, there were also calls for an improved standard of living. The situation in the field remained relatively calm. Several constitutional amendments were proposed, including the creation of an independent election commission, a new political parties' law and the establishment of a constitutional

[7] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics "Press report: preliminary estimates of quarterly national accounts (third quarter 2011)" (Ramallah, Palestine, 2011).

court. As in all other fields of operation, salary increases for Jordanian public sector workers placed a financial burden on UNRWA, as the Agency's pay policy is to match host country salaries. In 2011, UNRWA matched the Government of Jordan's increase of 20 Jordanian dinars per person per month, adding $2.7 million to wage costs in Jordan alone.

B. Operational developments

10. Across its five fields of operation, UNRWA provides a measure of protection and human development for the Palestine refugees through the provision of services in the areas of education, health, relief, social services, infrastructure and camp improvement, and microfinance. In addition, UNRWA provides humanitarian assistance to refugees affected by emergencies and to persons displaced by the 1967 and subsequent hostilities, in accordance with its mandate. Since 2000, the Agency's large-scale emergency intervention has been in the occupied Palestinian territory, providing basic humanitarian assistance in addition to the regular programmes. During the reporting period, the Agency continued its emergency operations in the occupied Palestinian territory, under an emergency appeal for $379 million. By the end of the year, donors had funded $153.7 million, or around 40 per cent, of the appeal.

11. In the Gaza Strip in 2011, UNRWA further improved its targeting and programme responses and reduced its emergency food assistance caseload from 714,000 refugees in the first round of assistance to 690,000 in the third. UNRWA also provided school meals to approximately 213,000 children per month in the Gaza Strip.

12. In addition, UNRWA provided short-term job opportunities to a total of 31,972 unemployed refugees. This was a significant decrease compared with 2010, when UNRWA was able to provide temporary employment to 42,685 refugees, and resulted from declining contributions to the emergency appeal. The reduction in short-term jobs offered by UNRWA is cause for concern, as UNRWA has estimated that such employment amounts to 32 per cent of overall refugee employment in the Gaza Strip. Access to education, health, water and sanitation services, in which UNRWA plays a critical role, continued to be a challenge owing to the deteriorating humanitarian context. UNRWA health centres received an additional 80,000 patient visits in 2011 as compared with 2010.

13. In the West Bank during the period, the Agency provided emergency food aid to 10,070 families and assisted an estimated 27,387 refugees with temporary employment, which supported approximately 166,000 additional dependants. The Agency also implemented 19 protection projects in 14 villages in area C and the "seam zone".[8] The projects encourage viable community-based economic activity, and help the residents to earn an income and improve their standard of living in their communities. There was an increase in reports of settler violence against Palestinians in 2011, in spite of condemnations by Israeli authorities and several indictments. UNRWA recorded 586 incidents — the highest since it began recording in 2002 — compared with 483 in 2010. There was also an increase in Israeli demolitions of Palestinian structures in area C. In 2011, the demolition of at least

[8] The closed area between the 1949 armistice line (the Green Line) and the barrier.

622 Palestinian structures was recorded in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem (including at least 222 residential units), compared with 439 structures, (including 140 residential units) in 2010.[9]

14. In the Syrian Arab Republic, as a result of the increasing poverty of Palestine refugees and the overall situation, the demand for UNRWA services — in particular social safety net services of cash and food — grew exponentially. As a response to the increasing needs, UNRWA provided 3,500 households with cash assistance, including those displaced in Latakia in 2011. At the end of 2011, 17,000 households were seeking urgent cash assistance, a significant increase over the UNRWA normal social safety net programme. The Agency was working to ensure that those in need were reached quickly.

15. In Lebanon in September, UNRWA handed over 369 new shelters to refugee families in the first completed phase of the reconstruction of the Nahr el-Bared camp. The Agency also completed three new school buildings. However, funding shortfalls and a difficult operating environment continued to pose a challenge to progress with relief and reconstruction and prolonged hardships for the 27,000 refugees displaced from the camp since 2007. As at end December 2011, pledges amounting to $15.2 million had been received against an appeal for $18.5 million to meet basic needs of the displaced refugees awaiting reconstruction of the camp. The Agency's parallel appeal to reconstruct the camp was also underfunded, with pledges amounting to $165.7 million received against the $348 million appeal as at the end of the reporting period.

16. To address the special needs of the refugees in Lebanon, on 28 September UNRWA launched its "restoring dignity" appeal, covering a five-year period. The appeal requested $147 million over and above the Agency's programme budget, which would continue to support UNRWA core activities. Drawing from the 2010 American University of Beirut socioeconomic survey of Palestine refugees, the restoring dignity appeal provides for additional interventions for shelter and infrastructure, health, education, relief, vocational training and employment services.

17. The security of UNRWA staff remained of serious concern, in particular threats to and attacks on locally recruited staff while delivering services. The Agency is exploring ways to prevent and respond to attacks in cooperation with host authorities, consistent with United Nations privileges and immunities. UNRWA is indebted to its staff and acknowledges their dedication and loyalty and the need to take further steps to address their security. Those working in areas of conflict are particularly commended. The Agency notes with regret that the local employees of UNRWA are the only United Nations staff members in the area who do not receive hazard pay and reiterates its calls for that issue to be addressed.

C. Organizational developments

18. Further progress was made in 2011 in advancing the Agency's comprehensive programme reforms, under the sustaining change plan. Building on the organizational development process initiated in 2006, the reforms aim to complete the Agency's institutional transformation by strengthening its management systems

[9] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The Monthly Humanitarian Monitor* (December 2011).

and the effectiveness of its human development and anti-poverty interventions over the next two bienniums (2012-2015). The Agency presented a package of proposed reforms of its health and education programmes to the UNRWA Advisory Commission in June. The reform plan for the Agency's relief and social services programme was presented to the Advisory Commission in November. Further details of the plans are set out in the programme framework in chapter III of the present report. In conjunction with the sustaining change plan, UNRWA also presented a detailed resource mobilization strategy to the Advisory Commission in November, and moved forward with implementation during the reporting period. Details of the plan can be found in paragraph 22. Adding to the momentum of reform, in February 2011, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/89, the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the management capacity of UNRWA (A/65/705) was presented to the General Assembly. In the report, the Secretary-General stated that it was essential that the far-reaching management reform process begun in 2005 be maintained and deepened and that extrabudgetary contributions from traditional and non-traditional donors must rise significantly over the coming five years, to enable the Commissioner-General to implement the Agency's medium-term strategy over the period 2010-2015, thus providing refugees with improved basic services. He also indicated his support for a proposal for Member States to commit to an increased level of funding from the United Nations regular budget to help secure the Agency's management capacity. In its resolution 65/272 the General Assembly took note with appreciation of the report, and requested the Secretary-General to continue to support the institutional strengthening of the Agency through the provision of financial resources from the regular budget of the United Nations.

19. In 2011, the Agency also received the findings of an independent external evaluation of its organization development reforms. The assessment found that organizational development did strengthen the capacity of UNRWA to serve Palestine refugees, noting that a majority of the initiatives had been implemented and that the reform's prevalent communicative, participatory and empowering management approach enabled managers to improve the effectiveness of the Agency's work. The report also identified areas for improvement, among them internal communication and the roll-out of human resources reforms related to classification and compensation. The evaluation's lead author presented the report and a summary of its findings to the UNRWA Advisory Commission in November 2011. The Agency's senior management has responded to the evaluation and informed the Advisory Commission of its continuing change management process with relevant recommendations from the evaluation.

20. During the reporting period, UNRWA made strides in the implementation of an enterprise resource planning system. The system will allow the Agency to integrate disparate management information tools in the areas of procurement, finance and human resources. Additionally, it will provide senior management with real-time data on the allocation of budgeted resources and actual programme expenditure. The continuing absence of such a system poses a risk to the Agency's operability, as vendor support for the existing systems will end in 2014. Following extensive assessments of options for enterprise resource planning systems, the Agency identified a partnership with another United Nations agency as providing the greatest cost efficiencies. To that end, the Agency signed a memorandum of understanding with the World Food Programme in late 2011. The estimated cost of the system is approximately $32 million over three years. Once implemented, the new system will

help optimize human resources management and the Agency's large-scale procurement and logistics functions. Programmes will also benefit from more comprehensive data that will facilitate better planning and prioritization of funds allocation. Management of funds will be strengthened from the point of contributions received to the final financial report. Operational processes will be streamlined, promoting efficiency and effectiveness. Enhanced monitoring and oversight will enable programmes to adjust initiatives to strengthen service delivery.

21. The Agency continued its introduction of more transparent and detailed monthly financial reporting, and throughout 2011 prepared for the adoption of the new accounting system, which is compliant with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, on 1 January 2012. The Agency sought to improve its programme budget preparation for the biennium 2012-2013 through the introduction of Agency-wide budget hearings involving close consultations between headquarters and the fields of operation, and an annual results review.

22. During the period, the External Relations Department and the Public Information Office were combined to form the External Relations and Communications Department. In June, the integrated Department finalized a new resource mobilization strategy for UNRWA, which was endorsed by the UNRWA Advisory Commission in November. The strategy identified three areas of focus for the Agency: deepening the relationship with core donors; diversifying the donor base (including through increased funding from Arab donors); and developing the Agency's capacity to enhance donor relations. As part of the new integrated Department, the Communications Division created and distributed a broad range of media products in support of the resource mobilization strategy. Key to the strategy are efforts to build on resource mobilization achievements and further diversify the donor base; by 2011, the structure of contributions from the major government donors to UNRWA was as diverse as that of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which rank among the most effective mobilizers of voluntary resources among the specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system. The work of the Arab Partners Unit of the External Relations and Communications Department contributed to the results in 2011, when Saudi Arabia became the third largest overall donor to UNRWA. Efforts of the Donor Relations Unit to reach out to emerging markets led in 2011 to announcements of significant new contributions from countries with emerging economies, such as Brazil. Those efforts were further enhanced with the establishment of the Partnerships Division in 2011, which began the process of expanding the Agency's outreach to private partners, private individuals (including high net worth individuals) and foundations.

23. In addition to supporting the resource mobilization strategy, the Agency's newly configured Communications Division supported high levels of visibility for the UNRWA brand using an innovative, cost-effective mix of new media, old media and traditional communications tools. Major UNRWA stories featured in local, regional and global media in 2011, including UNRWA initiatives in the Gaza Strip — a green school, the summer games and the UNRWA marathon — and the promotion of the "dignity for all" appeal in Lebanon. The UNRWA website secured an average of 56,000 visitors per month, with 2,808,039 page views during 2011. The Agency also increased the number of its Facebook supporters to almost 20,000. Other key activities were undertaken in 2011 in line with the Agency's protection mandate,

including the ongoing web-based campaign drawing attention to demolitions in the West Bank and their impact on Palestinians.

24. In July 2011, the UNRWA human resources department issued a new staffing framework, which included new policies for the selection and management of all categories of staff and complementary personnel. In accordance with the decentralization of selection decisions, UNRWA field offices now have the authority to decide on the optimal use of different contractual modalities. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 63/253 on the administration of justice at the United Nations, the Agency implemented a new mediation system in May 2011, providing staff with an informal dispute resolution opportunity in combination with, or as an alternative to, formal dispute resolution.

D. Legal matters

Agency staff

25. Israeli authorities, raising security concerns, continued to restrict the freedom of movement of UNRWA personnel in the occupied Palestinian territory. The restrictions included closures of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; prohibition of local staff from travelling in United Nations vehicles across the Erez crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip, or across the Allenby Bridge, or from driving in Israel and East Jerusalem; and cumbersome procedures for obtaining permits for local staff to enter Israel and East Jerusalem. On many occasions, permits were not granted even though the procedures were followed. On average, permits to enter East Jerusalem were not issued to 15 per cent (75 individuals) of the Agency's personnel, who needed them, and in many cases no reasons were given for the denials.

26. At the Allenby Bridge, Israeli procedures continued to request searches of United Nations vehicles that would violate the immunity of the United Nations, unless an occupant held an identification card issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel. The procedures restricted in particular the movement of international staff based at UNRWA headquarters in Amman, to whom the Ministry does not issue such cards.

27. The Erez crossing procedures often remained time-consuming, with average wait times of about 30 minutes on the Gaza Strip side of the crossing, endangering international staff members' safety. Israeli procedures continued to request that United Nations vehicles be submitted to a search that would violate the immunity of the United Nations, unless the vehicle included a United Nations staff member holding a diplomatic visa or was driven by an international staff member on a limited list approved by the Israeli authorities. On many occasions at checkpoints entering East Jerusalem, Israeli authorities refused to permit UNRWA staff members in United Nations vehicles to cross without a vehicle search that would violate the immunity of the United Nations. On three occasions the Israeli authorities conducted searches, which the Agency protested.

28. The above-mentioned restrictions are inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations, the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, relevant United Nations resolutions and the 1967 Comay-Michelmore agreement, by which the Government of Israel is obligated to facilitate the task of

UNRWA to the best of its ability, subject only to regulations or arrangements which may be necessitated by considerations of military security.

29. UNRWA applied for permits for local staff to enter East Jerusalem for operational and humanitarian reasons only and without prejudice to relevant United Nations resolutions, including resolutions relating to the status of Jerusalem.

30. The Israeli authorities maintained that the restrictions were necessary to protect Israel against terrorist threats. Evidence was not available to the Agency, however, to indicate that measures concerning Agency staff and movement were anything other than matters of police or administrative convenience.

31. In the West Bank, coordination with Israeli military liaison officers continued, including 70 meetings. However, the officers had limited or no influence over Israeli checkpoints staffed by private contractors, and staff movement continued to be restricted and unpredictable at several checkpoints, notably those controlling access to East Jerusalem or through the West Bank barrier. In 2011, movement restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities on the West Bank resulted in the loss of 163 staff days. Additional Agency time and resources were expended to adapt to the restrictions. It remained difficult to deliver Agency services in the area between the West Bank barrier and the 1949 armistice line, in particular in the Barta'a area and, from September 2011, in two communities south of Qalqilya.

32. Local staff required permits from the Israeli authorities to transit the Erez crossing. Of a total of 157 applications, 118 permits (76 per cent) were granted, compared to 58 per cent in 2010.

33. In 2011, the Rafah crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip was open for public use for a total of 267 of 363 scheduled days (73 per cent). With the cooperation of the Egyptian authorities, UNRWA staff members have been allowed to cross two days a week, after obtaining the necessary coordination. A total of 569 UNRWA staff were allowed to cross on duty travel outside the occupied Palestinian territory, while 4 staff initially denied permission were granted permission after numerous requests.

34. During the reporting period, no significant movement restrictions were imposed on UNRWA staff by the Governments of Jordan or Lebanon, or by the Palestinian Authority.

35. In the Syrian Arab Republic, from March 2011, a substantial number of checkpoints were erected, but they had no substantial impact on the movement of staff. From March 2011, the Syrian authorities refused to either issue or renew visas of many UNRWA staff. During the reporting period, there were 180 applications for visas for staff members outside the Syrian Arab Republic to visit that country on mission, of which 159 were granted (88 per cent). The Syrian authorities did not issue visas for two international staff members of the field office in the Syrian Arab Republic. The visa and residency status of an international seconded staff member was revoked during the reporting period.

36. At the end of 2011, seven staff members were in detention, four of whom were held by the Israeli authorities, two by the Jordanian and one by the Lebanese authorities. Despite repeated requests made by the Agency, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 36/232, the Israeli authorities did not provide the Agency with access to its detained staff but provided some information on the reasons for detention of three of the four staff members. The Lebanese authorities

provided some information and access to detained staff. As at the end of the reporting period, the Jordanian authorities provided some information about one detained staff member.

Agency services and premises

37. The Israeli authorities continued to impose transit charges on shipments entering the Gaza Strip, forcing UNRWA to pay $344,744 in 2011. In the Agency's view, the charge is a direct tax, from which it ought to be exempt under the 1946 Convention. In Israel's view, the charges were a fee for services and therefore there was no exemption. The normal route for the Agency's humanitarian shipments into the Gaza Strip would be through the Karni crossing, except for construction materials, which would enter through the Sofa crossing. Throughout 2011, however, the Israeli authorities continued the closure of the Karni crossing for all containers and of the Sofa crossing, and all UNRWA container shipments were required to enter through one secondary crossing, Kerem Shalom. As that crossing was not capable of receiving containers, all container shipments had to be palletized at port prior to transport to the Gaza Strip. Furthermore, the Kerem Shalom crossing was closed for imports for 38 full days and 2 half days out of 261 scheduled operating days. The closures of the Karni crossing and the requirement to palletize all container shipments contributed to increased expenditure in the form of charges for storage, demurrage, transportation and palletization of some $3.59 million, including $1.26 million for palletization costs. On 1 March 2011 the Israeli authorities closed the remaining conveyor belt at Karni crossing, which had been used for bulk wheat and animal feed, and, from May 2010, for bulk aggregate for construction projects approved by Israeli authorities.

38. The Israeli authorities announced in June 2010 that they would liberalize the system by which civilian goods entered Gaza and expand the inflow of materials for civilian projects that were under international supervision. Since then, UNRWA has been able to complete 20 construction projects, and start or restart 26 projects in 2011, importing 7,571 truckloads of construction materials for projects approved by Israeli authorities. However, the procedures required to import the necessary construction materials were cumbersome and expensive, obliging UNRWA to employ, during the period, one additional international staff member and seven additional local staff to address the additional bureaucratic burden. In addition, 1,204 guards were employed to ensure the security of imported materials. At the end of 2011, 73 construction projects had been approved, while 38 construction projects submitted to the Israeli authorities remained on hold, awaiting approval, including three fully funded housing projects submitted for approval in September 2010 and March 2011 for the construction of 1,641 housing units in the Gaza Strip.

39. During the reporting period, Israeli authorities continued to require standards testing for electronic, medical and other items for official use. UNRWA imports goods for its official use that conform to international standards, and it considers that the current Israeli requirements are contrary to the exemption under the 1946 Convention from prohibitions and restrictions on imports in respect of articles imported by the United Nations for its official use. As at the end of the reporting period, consignments destined for the West Bank were held up for up to 364 days resulting in storage costs of some $44,000. Despite discussions with relevant Israeli authorities, the issue remained unresolved at the end of the reporting period.

40. In the Syrian Arab Republic, requests to the Syrian authorities to import buses purchased by UNRWA for official use had not been granted as at the end of the reporting period.

41. The Operations Support Officer programme continued in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and Lebanon. The programme played an invaluable role in upholding United Nations neutrality; in facilitating access of UNRWA staff members, vehicles and goods through checkpoints and, in the occupied Palestinian territory, to areas affected by Israeli military operations; in supporting the Agency's programmes and initiatives; in monitoring the humanitarian situation of the Palestinian population; in the inspection of UNRWA installations; and in providing a measure of protection to refugees, including the displaced.

42. The 1946 Convention provides that the premises of the United Nations shall be inviolable. Contrary to that legal obligation, the Israeli military and security forces entered UNRWA premises in the West Bank on two occasions. On another occasion Israeli forces threw a percussion grenade inside the yard of the UNRWA Hebron boys' school, while class was in session. There were five other incidents in the West Bank in which spent Israeli ordnance, including tear gas canisters and rubber-coated metal bullets, were found on UNRWA premises. The Agency protested these incidents. In the Gaza Strip, on one occasion, an UNRWA school was damaged as a result of an Israeli airstrike on a nearby location. On another occasion, an UNRWA guard, who was guarding cement imported to the Gaza Strip from Israel at a local concrete factory, sustained injuries following an Israeli missile strike on an adjacent area.

43. Following approval by the Israeli authorities on 15 November 2010, on 18 September 2011 the Agency commenced reconstruction of the Gaza field office warehouse destroyed on 15 January 2009.

44. In the West Bank, on three occasions unauthorized community events were held on UNRWA premises, including one incident on 15 May 2011 that involved high-level Palestinian Authority officials. The Agency protested the incident. There were six incidents involving threats or attacks against staff by Palestinians, including one in which staff members were held at gunpoint, and 12 incidents of unauthorized entry or break-in into UNRWA installations, which in two cases involved armed individuals and live fire. In the Gaza Strip, on 14 December 2011, the anniversary of the creation of the Hamas party, unknown masked men entered three schools, threatening staff and forcing the students to leave school in two instances. In three instances, students at or adjacent to UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip sustained gunshot wounds from unknown sources. On two occasions, UNRWA installations in the Gaza Strip were struck by missiles or hand grenades fired by unknown Palestinian sources.

45. In the Syrian Arab Republic, several incidents occurred in connection with the general situation of unrest. UNRWA installations in Latakia and Homs sustained minor damage to their exterior during military operations in August 2011. On one occasion, an unidentified gunman entered an UNRWA school in Homs and fired shots, reportedly into the air, before fleeing. In another instance, a ramp placed between a security installation and the roof of an UNRWA school in Dera'a was removed following the Agency's protest. There were no violations of UNRWA premises in Jordan. In Lebanon, on one occasion, two unknown individuals broke into an UNRWA school in Tripoli, North Lebanon, and threatened UNRWA staff.

46. Bearing in mind the Agency's duty to ensure the safety and security of its staff members, the Agency is concerned about the level of threats and attacks against its personnel in all five fields of operation and is exploring ways to prevent and respond to attacks, in cooperation with national authorities and consistent with United Nations privileges and immunities.

Other matters

47. In 2011, UNRWA did not receive any reimbursement for value-added tax from the Palestinian Authority. As at 31 December 2011, the total amount of value-added tax still due to the Agency for services and goods procured for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was approximately $54.1 million.

48. On 15 August 2011, the Commissioner-General and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Palestinian Authority signed an explanatory note regarding understanding and implementation of privileges and immunities and related responsibilities. The explanatory note, which is the result of discussions with the Palestinian Authority that commenced in 2010, confirms the mutual understanding of privileges and immunities and related responsibilities on the basis of international law and sets out standard operating procedures for their strengthened implementation. The explanatory note does not modify the agreement dated 5 July 1996 between the Palestinian Authority and UNRWA or other applicable international law.

49. During the reporting period, the Agency was required, as in the past, to pay port fees and other charges to the Syrian authorities, contrary to the 1948 Agreement between the United Nations and the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. In 2011, fees and charges totalling $25,547 were paid.

Legal status of Palestine refugees in the Agency's areas of operation

50. The legal status of Palestine refugees in Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip remained substantially the same as that described in the report of the Commissioner-General for 2008.[10]

51. Further to the matter described in the report of the Commissioner-General for 2010,[11] implementation procedures for the amendments to the labour and social security laws enacted by the Parliament of Lebanon on 17 August 2010 had not yet been adopted as at the end of the reporting period. A 1957 decree still in force governs the movement of Palestine refugees, who in practice may freely change their residence in the country. Palestine refugees have limited access to government services and have to depend almost entirely on UNRWA for basic services. Legislation preventing Palestine refugees from buying immovable property remained in force.

E. Financial overview

Sources of funding

52. With the exception of 133 international staff posts funded by the General Assembly through the United Nations regular budget as of the biennium 2012-2013, UNRWA operations, projects and emergency appeals are funded by the voluntary

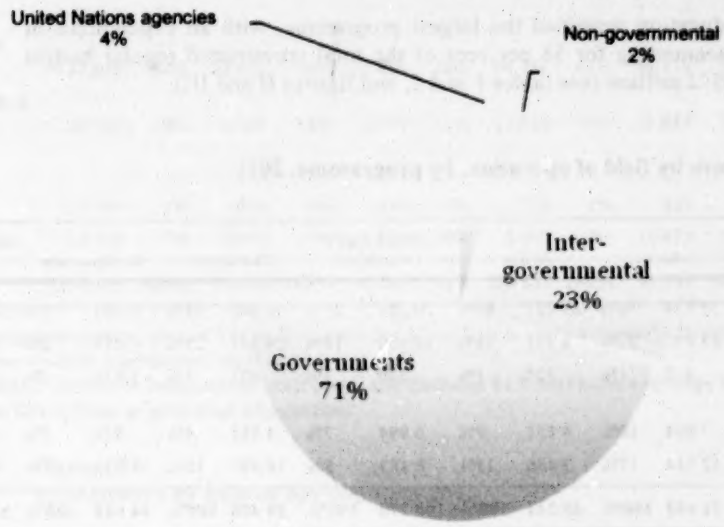
[10] See A/64/13, paras. 52-55.

[11] See A/66/13, paras. 44-45.

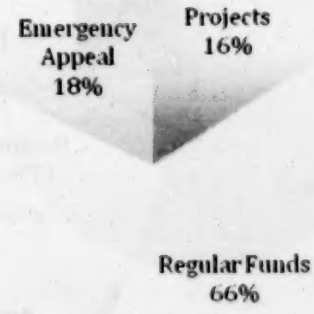
contributions of donors (see figure I). Projects are earmarked contributions for specific activities that complement the Agency's regular programmes.

Figure I
Distribution of sources of funding by donor category and funding channel

By donor category



By funding channel



Expenditure

53. In 2011, the Agency expended $989.8 million. The largest type of expenditure was $572 million under the unrestricted regular budget, accounting for 57.9 per cent of total expenditure. Restricted fund activities, emergency activities and projects accounted for 3.9 per cent, 22.4 per cent and 14.9 per cent, respectively. Inadequate funding forced the Agency to implement a range of stringent measures, including reductions in travel for training purposes.

54. In 2011, education remained the largest programme, with an expenditure of $333.8 million accounting for 58 per cent of the total unrestricted regular budget expenditure of $572 million (see tables 1 and 2, and figures II and III).

Table 1
General Fund actual expenditure by field of operation, by programme, 2011
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Programme	*Gaza Strip*		*Lebanon*		*Jordan*		*Syrian Arab Republic*		*West Bank*		*Headquarters*		***Total***	
Education	141 074	69%	35 974	50%	29 727	62%	70 581	67%	54 041	54%	2 403	5%	**333 800**	**58%**
Health	30 129	15%	15 897	22%	8 551	18%	18 950	18%	24 501	25%	677	2%	**98 706**	**17%**
Infrastructure	3 082	2%	412	1%	325	1%	530	1%	631	1%	1 636	4%	**6 616**	**1%**
Relief and social services	14 413	7%	7 064	10%	4 151	9%	6 994	7%	4 212	4%	970	2%	**37 804**	**7%**
Support services	14 662	7%	12 314	17%	5 486	11%	8 183	8%	16 095	16%	38 956	87%	**95 696**	**17%**
Total	**203 360**	**100%**	**71 662**	**100%**	**48 241**	**100%**	**105 238**	**100%**	**99 480**	**100%**	**44 642**	**100%**	**572 622**	**100%**

Figure II
Expenditure by programme

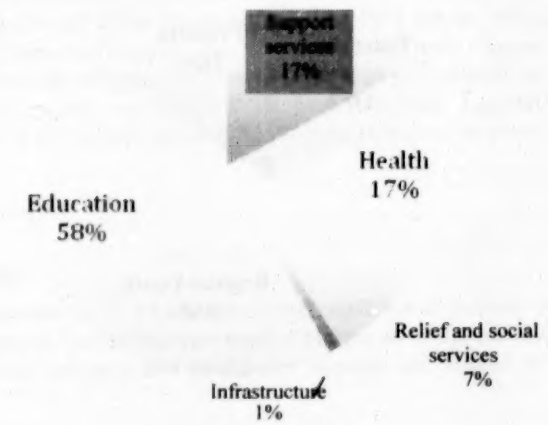
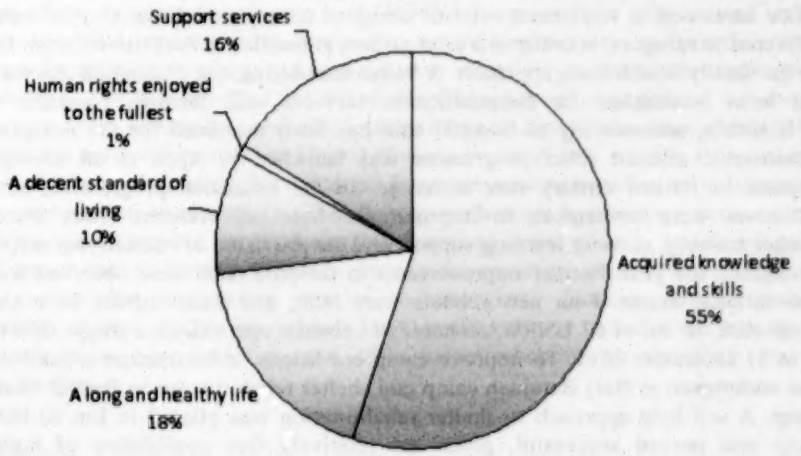


Table 2
General Fund actual expenditure by field of operation, by human development goal, 2011
(In thousands of United States dollars)

Human development goal	*Gaza Strip*		*Lebanon*		*Jordan*		*Syrian Arab Republic*		*West Bank*		*Headquarters*		*Total*	
Long and healthy life	29 485	14%	19 706	27%	9 366	19%	18 948	18%	24 275	24%	1 117	3%	**102 898**	**18%**
Acquired knowledge and skills	137 636	68%	32 945	46%	27 830	58%	66 218	63%	46 755	47%	2 555	6%	**313 939**	**55%**
A decent standard of living	20 766	10%	9 746	14%	5 770	12%	10 542	10%	10 845	11%	1 990	4%	**59 659**	**10%**
Human rights enjoyed to the fullest	1 044	1%	314	0%	441	1%	758	1%	933	1%	784	2%	**4 274**	**1%**
Support services	14 428	7%	8 949	12%	4 834	10%	8 771	8%	16 672	17%	38 197	86%	**91 852**	**16%**
Total	**203 359**	**100%**	**71 660**	**100%**	**48 241**	**100%**	**105 237**	**100%**	**99 480**	**100%**	**44 643**[a]	**100%**	**572 622**[b]	**100%**

[a] The headquarters support cost of $38 million includes $7 million in early voluntary retirement costs for fields operations, and $16 million towards international staff costs.
[b] Includes $25.3 million in international staff costs, and excludes $1.8 million in exchange losses, $2.3 million in derivative losses and $23 million in prior-year adjustments.

Figure III
Expenditure by human development goal



Chapter II
Field priorities

A. Jordan

55. Jordan hosts the largest population of Palestine refugees, numbering 1,979,580 as at 31 December 2011. During the reporting period, the Agency's field management continued to identify efficiencies and savings to address funding shortfalls, while working to implement health and education reform strategies in line with Agency-wide processes. As part of the family health team reform of the health programme, the e-health system, which aims to digitize the health records of patients at UNRWA clinics, and the new appointment system, which helps to reduce clinic overcrowding and delays at peak times, were successfully rolled out at five health centres. The reforms directly benefited over 250,000 patients per year and resulted in more efficient service, shorter waiting times for patients and more precise monitoring of staff time, medical supply use and expenditures. In the relief and social services programme, the shift from the status-based special hardship case programme to the needs-based social safety net programme was accelerated in 2011, and all families benefiting from the social hardship case programme were reassessed using a proxy means test formula to determine their level of poverty. For social safety net beneficiaries, a new method of cash distribution through post offices was also successfully piloted. Evidence suggests cash transfers are a better method of assisting people out of poverty on a more sustainable basis than food assistance.

B. Lebanon

56. As at 31 December 2011, the registered Palestine refugee population in Lebanon stood at 436,154. During the reporting period, the Agency's Lebanon field office continued to implement reforms designed to improve the quality of services delivered to refugees. It initiated a pilot project at the Beirut Polyclinic Center based on the family health team approach. A better monitoring and evaluation mechanism has been established for hospitalization services and, through contracts with 35 hospitals, accessibility to hospital care has been increased for the refugees. A catastrophic ailment relief programme was launched in April in an attempt to respond to limited tertiary care coverage. In the education programme, several initiatives were undertaken to improve academic achievement. They included teacher training, summer learning support and the provision of recreational activities throughout the year. Further improvements in the pass rates were observed for the two national exams. Four new schools were built, and double shifts were almost eliminated; 65 out of 67 UNRWA schools in Lebanon operated on a single-shift basis as at 31 December 2011. To improve camp conditions, infrastructure rehabilitation was undertaken in Burj Barajneh camp and shelter rehabilitation in Burj el-Shemali camp. A self-help approach to shelter rehabilitation was piloted in Ein El-Hilweh camp and proved successful, given the relatively free availability of building materials in Lebanon and the latitude accorded to self-help beneficiaries in sourcing their purchases of materials. The pilot led to a 50 per cent decrease in rehabilitation costs per shelter.

C. Syrian Arab Republic

56. As at 31 December 2011, the registered Palestine refugee population in the Syrian Arab Republic stood at 486,946. Under the conditions of conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2011, with related severe economic repercussions, the Agency's field management expanded its humanitarian assistance using project funding, prioritizing livelihood support to the elderly, female-headed households and families with special needs. Recurring violence affected UNRWA services in and around a number of refugee camps, where school enrolment, assistance to the most vulnerable and microfinance lending were curtailed. However, the Agency was able to maintain operations in most areas. During the year, it prepared the health programme for the rollout of an online e-health management system and focused reforms in the education programme on delivering inclusive education for students with special needs. Construction was completed on a complex to house the "engaging youth" project, the UNRWA vocational training and employability programme designed to address high youth unemployment among Palestine refugees. The Agency also continued its Ramadan camp initiative, a programme of camp and shelter repairs and improvements operated in partnership with UNICEF and the General Authority for Palestine Arab Refugees of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic.

D. West Bank

58. As at 31 December 2011, the registered Palestine refugee population of the West Bank was 727,471. During the reporting period, in addition to implementing programme reforms under the Agency-wide sustaining change process, UNRWA field management undertook a new community engagement programme with the purpose of enhancing service delivery and improving refugee self-reliance. One element of the strategy was to empower UNRWA camp services officers and area officers to make programming decisions, as their proximity to beneficiaries improves the capacity to assess and respond more effectively to the needs of refugee communities. The Agency also increased the frequency of engagement between senior staff, camp committees and other stakeholders to discuss key issues. UNRWA also joined a partnership with the United Nations country team and the Palestinian Authority's national strategy for youth to focus on new approaches to enhancing youth employment opportunities. The Agency undertook a year-long process of evaluating and improving the database that it uses to target poverty by identifying food-insecure and vulnerable refugees. During the reporting period, UNRWA also began to transfer programmes out of its emergency funding process, with community mental health in schools and health clinics transferred into the framework of its core activities, and with shelter rehabilitation transferred into project funding.

E. Gaza Strip

59. As at 31 December 2011, the registered Palestine refugee population in the Gaza Strip stood at 1,167,572. During the reporting period, UNRWA strengthened its efforts to better target assistance to those most in need through wider application of a poverty survey, on the basis of a proxy means test formula; over 150,000

families were surveyed in 2011. As of the end of 2011, 780,000 refugees in abject or absolute poverty had received food assistance from UNRWA, 680,000 under the emergency programme and 100,000 from the social safety net funded by the regular budget. Those figures were a slight increase over previous years, indicating the lack of substantial improvement in the humanitarian situation. UNRWA also used the results of the poverty survey to better target assistance through its cash-for-work scheme, known as the "job creation programme". Over the year, the equivalent of nearly 8,000 jobs were created on a short-term basis, an estimated $28 million was injected into the local economy and approximately 32,000 refugees benefited directly. The number of contracts awarded under the programme was slashed in the third quarter of 2011 owing to the sharp drop in funding for the Agency's emergency appeal. By the end of 2011, only 29 per cent (3,152) of the contracts remained active as compared with over 10,000 in late 2010.

60. Reconstruction of the Gaza Strip remained a key priority for UNRWA in 2011, and continuing efforts were made to accelerate implementation of the Agency's $667 million reconstruction plan. Under that plan, by the end of 2011, UNRWA had completed 20 projects worth some $19 million, and had initiated 31 new projects valued at $130 million. In addition, from January to June 2011, approvals to begin 46 other projects were received from the Government of Israel. In the second half of the year, no project was approved. During the year, UNRWA completed construction of three health centres, six schools and 33 housing units. Overall, ongoing projects in 2011 injected $54 million into the economy of the Gaza Strip and created the equivalent of 5,200 jobs. However, as at the end of 2011, 38 projects awaited Israeli approval, including four fully funded housing projects and 32 schools, of which 19 are fully funded.

61. Students needing additional support benefited from the launch of an interactive learning website for grades 1-3 and a summer learning programme for over 40,000 students, 87.7 per cent of whom passed the exams following the summer lessons. For the fifth year in a row, UNRWA provided an important human development opportunity for over 200,000 children in the Gaza Strip for six weeks in the summer. The UNRWA summer games form an essential component of the Agency's "schools of excellence" initiative. They are also a unique recreational experience for children in the Gaza Strip suffering from the effects of chronic conflict and endemic poverty exacerbated by the blockade.

Chapter III
Subprogramme review presented within the framework of the UNRWA human development goals

62. Since 2010 UNRWA has followed the framework set out in its medium-term strategy 2010-2015. The strategy provides direction for the Agency on the basis of 15 strategic objectives, each of which contributes to one or more of four human development goals: a long and healthy life; acquired knowledge and skills; a decent standard of living; and human rights enjoyed to the fullest.

63. In 2011, the Agency's field offices and headquarters departments worked towards biennium targets set out in field and headquarters implementation plans that are based on the Agency's five-year strategic vision and refugee needs assessments conducted by each field office. Sections A through D indicate progress made towards meeting the UNRWA targets.

A. Goal 1
A long and healthy life

64. The Agency delivers basic health services to refugees and provides safe water and sanitation to Palestine refugees living in camps and some gatherings. Despite the difficult conditions prevailing in camp communities, communicable diseases are under control, and infant, child mortality and maternal rates have declined substantially over the past two decades.

65. The human development goal of a long and healthy life is achieved through the UNRWA health programme and interventions by the camp improvement and infrastructure programme, in collaboration with host countries and national and international partners where applicable. Non-communicable diseases such as hypertension and diabetes are now the leading health challenges among Palestine refugees. Increasing numbers of patients need lifelong care for these chronic diseases; demand for health care is escalating. Such needs, accompanied by rising health-care costs and stagnating resources, have made it necessary for UNRWA to seek new ways of delivering health care.

66. In 2011, UNRWA embarked on a health reform process, focusing on the introduction of a family health team approach. A family health team consists of a multidisciplinary group of health professionals working together to serve the comprehensive health-care needs of the individual and the family. Continuity of care is ensured, and there is a strong focus on building relationships among health-care providers, patients, families and communities. The family health team approach was piloted in two clinics late in 2011. The pilots achieved improvements in workload distribution and increased efficiency in the use of staff time and skills. The experience gained through the pilots enabled UNRWA to develop a standardized family health team introduction package to guide staff in preparing for and implementing the approach.

67. UNRWA also developed an electronic patient record system, e-health, to replace the existing system of hard copy records. During the period, pilot facilities were equipped with computer infrastructure; staff were trained to use e-health; and implementation commenced. The system has significantly streamlined the

management of individual patient information, particularly for long-term patients with non-communicable diseases. At the same time, e-health reduced the recording and reporting burden for staff. The family health team approach and e-health, however, require substantial investment in systems development and staff capacity. They also substantially improve the care of non-communicable diseases. However, resource constraints prevented UNRWA from including cholesterol-lowering medicines in its list of essential drugs, even though they are critical to the management of a high proportion of these patients. The complications of such diseases may be severe, requiring hospitalization, and may result in disability. Management of the increasing burden of chronic diseases, therefore, has substantial resource implications for staffing, medicines and hospital care.

68. During the reporting period, under its infrastructure and camp improvement programme, UNRWA constructed or rehabilitated the shelters for the families living in structurally unsound, unsafe and unhygienic conditions, enabling the rehabilitation of 635 shelters. However, the shortage of funding meant that the total remained a small proportion of the 10,000 shelters estimated to be in need of rehabilitation across all five fields of operation. The programme also included continuing efforts to improve facilities for refugees, and during the reporting period UNRWA constructed, rehabilitated or extended 33 schools, eight health centres and eight community development centres across the fields of operation. Nearly 99 per cent of camp shelters are connected to a water network, and almost 94 per cent of refugee shelters are now connected to a public sewerage network. In 2011, through the programme, UNRWA undertook infrastructure projects in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip that included the construction of 12 kilometres of main sewage lines, 19 kilometres of water supply lines and 100,000 square metres of pathways.

Strategic objective 1
To ensure universal access to quality, comprehensive primary health care

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishments	*Indicators of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
(a) Enhanced efficiency in the use of qualified workforce ensured	Percentage of outpatients and clients attending general clinics by appointment	Baseline	31.0
		Target	68.8
		Actual (2011)	63.4
(b) Improved quality of health services	Antibiotic prescription rate	Baseline	31.5
		Target	24.4
		Actual (2011)	25.8

Outputs

- Average patient/client contact time with doctors was still brief at three minutes on average[12]
- 80 per cent of health clinic staff had passed a competency assessment test
- Average daily consultations per doctor were still high at 106

[12] Latest internal UNRWA data, as at start 2011.

- The rate of late complications among non-communicable disease patients was 12.1 per cent
- In all, 88,527 patients were subsidized for hospitalization for secondary or tertiary health care
- Four operational research studies were conducted in quality management
- All medicines on the UNRWA essential drug list were made available; drug shortages affected only a few medicines for a very limited duration
- Eight health centres (four in Gaza, three in Jordan and one in the West Bank) were built, reconstructed or extended, and another two health centres are under construction across the fields of operation

Strategic objective 2
To protect and promote family health

Expected accomplishment	*Indicators of achievement*	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Percentage*
Improved health outcomes	(i) Maternal mortality rate in line with host countries	Baseline	17.6
		Target	18.5
		Actual (2011)	22.3
	(ii) Infant mortality rate in line with host countries	Baseline	22.6
		Target	22.8
		Actual (2011)	23.0

Outputs

- 77.8 per cent of women registered for antenatal care during their first trimester
- The recovery rate of children with growth retardation was 22 per cent

Strategic objective 3
To prevent and control diseases

Expected accomplishment	*Indicators of achievement*	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Percentage*
Improved alignment of communicable disease prevalence with host authorities	(i) Vaccination rates for infants below 12 months of age	Baseline	99.0
		Target	99.1
		Actual (2011)	99.6
	(ii) Number of outbreaks related to vaccine-preventable diseases	Baseline	0
		Target	0
		Actual (2011)	0

Outputs

- 99.6 per cent of 18-month-old children were vaccinated
- Almost all shelters in camps have been connected to the UNRWA/municipal water network
- 93.6 per cent of shelters in camps are connected to a public sewerage network
- Infrastructure projects for Burj Barajneh and Mar Elias camps in Lebanon were completed, with the construction of 11 kilometres of sewage lines, 18 kilometres of water supply lines, two reservoirs and 56,0000 square metres of pathways. The design of a sewerage and drainage system was completed for Nahr el-Bared camp
- The design of a sewerage and drainage system was completed for Dera'a camp in the Syrian Arab Republic
- In Deir-el-Balah and Khan Younis camps in the Gaza Strip, 45,000 square metres of pavement, 0.9 kilometres of sewage pipes, 0.9 kilometres of water pipes and other infrastructure works were constructed

B. Goal 2
Acquired knowledge and skills

69. UNRWA operates 691 elementary and preparatory schools in all its areas of operation, as well as eight secondary schools in Lebanon, providing free basic education for around half a million Palestine refugee children. Literacy rates among Palestine refugees compare well with regional and global levels, and there has been gender equity in enrolment since the 1960s. Through its education system, UNRWA has the greatest potential to help Palestine refugee children to thrive, achieve their potential and grow up understanding their rights and respecting the rights of others. The UNRWA education programme also contributes to UNRWA human development goal 3 (a decent standard of living) by increasing employability through its technical and vocational training programme.

70. On 5 October 2011, UNRWA launched its education reform strategy. The reform aims to improve the effectiveness, relevance and efficiency of the Agency's education programme in the UNRWA schools. The strategy seeks to bring about transformational change through an integrated approach encompassing eight key areas: teacher development and school empowerment; curriculum and student assessment; inclusive education; technical and vocational education and training; governance; strategic planning, management and projects; research, development and the educational management information system; and partnerships, communication, and information and communications technology.

71. Key policies and strategies under development during the reporting period included the following: (a) the teacher policy, which seeks to professionalize and motivate the teaching staff; (b) the human rights education policy, which outlines the core principles and values of human rights education and its integration into teaching practice; (c) the inclusive education policy, which works to determine how best the needs of all students can be realized within the classroom; and (d) the education research strategy, which reflects the importance of evidence-based policy and decision-making. Substantive work was undertaken in developing a curriculum

framework to support evaluation and enrichment of the curriculum and ensure adherence to the principles and values of the United Nations. Specifications for an Agency-wide education management information system were also developed.

Strategic objective 4
To ensure universal access to and coverage of basic education

Expected accomplishments	*Indicators of achievement*	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Ratio*
(a) Improved access to quality education	(i) Pupil/teacher ratio	Baseline	28.0/1
		Target	27.1/1
		Actual (2011)	27.9/1
		Unit of measure	*Percentage*
	(ii) Percentage of students from vulnerable groups (vocational training centres and educational science facilities only)	Baseline	3.4
		Target	42.6
		Actual (2011	16.9
		Unit of measure	*Number*
	(iii) Number of new/upgraded schools adequately meeting infrastructure security and safety standards	Baseline	122
		Target	169
		Actual (2011)	117[a]
		Unit of measure	*Percentage*
(b) Reduced school dropout rates	(i) Dropout rate for elementary school		
	Male	Baseline	0.50
		Target	0.49
		Actual (2011)	0.66
	Female	Baseline	0.26
		Target	0.30
		Actual (2011)	0.36
	(ii) Dropout rate for preparatory school		
	Male	Baseline	2.94
		Target	3.04
		Actual (2011)	3.05
	Female	Baseline	2.28
		Target	2.53
		Actual (2011)	1.73

[a] Latest internal UNRWA data, as at start 2011.

Outputs

- Maintenance was carried out in a majority of schools
- A total of 33 schools (13 in the Gaza Strip; 12 in Jordan; 5 in Lebanon; 2 in the Syrian Arab Republic; and 1 in the West Bank) were built, reconstructed or extended, and another 17 schools (13 in the Gaza Strip; 3 in the West Bank and 1 in the Syrian Arab Republic) were under construction across the fields of operation

Strategic objective 5
To enhance educational quality and outcomes against set standards

Expected accomplishments	*Indicators of achievement*[a]	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Percentage*
(a) Improved monitoring of quality of education delivery	Percentage change in the mean score obtained by students on the monitoring learning achievement test, by gender	Baseline Target Actual (2011)	0.0 2.8 n/a
(b) Improved quality of school management	Proportion of schools in category "good" or "better" in management-related sections of the school quality review	Baseline Target Actual (2011)	0 15 n/a
(c) Improved curriculum delivery	Proportion of schools in category "good" or "better" in curriculum-related sections of the school quality review	Baseline Target Actual (2011)	0 15 n/a
(d) Improved professional competence of teaching staff	Proportion of teaching staff who meet professional requirements	Baseline Target Actual (2011)	69 93 n/a

Note: n/a = not available.
[a] Indicator to be replaced for next biennium.

Outputs

- All schools produced school development plans
- All schools developed curriculums for educational initiatives

Strategic objective 6
To improve access to educational opportunities for learners with special educational needs

Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Percentage*
Improved assessment, referral and mainstreaming of special educational needs students	Proportion of special educational needs students receiving support	Baseline Target Actual (2011)	1 78 n/a

Note: n/a = not available.

C. Goal 3
A decent standard of living

72. The Agency continued to deliver a social safety net comprised of food, cash and specialized services to almost 300,000 of the very poorest refugees in 2011. The Agency's activities in support of a decent standard of living require integrated interventions from the relief and social services, microfinance, education and camp improvement and infrastructure programmes.

73. The Agency's growing ability to assess poverty at the household level and target the most vulnerable ensured that resources went to those most in need. Rigorous assessment of the Agency's work to bridge poverty gaps in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has demonstrated that resources positively affect abject poverty levels.

74. During the reporting period the UNRWA relief and social services programme formulated a reform strategy which focuses on a gradual evolution away from food to cash as the dominant form of social transfer, and which proposes a more robust and effective attack on poverty through development programming. Through the proposed reform, the Agency seeks to maintain a sustainable safety net to Palestine refugees who need it, empower people to climb out of poverty and leverage the strengths inherent in refugee communities. In particular, the reform process recognizes the importance of youth, both in terms of what young people have to offer and the problems their unanswered needs can pose. Consequently, the reform strategy focuses considerable attention on employment, integration and social skills for youth.

Strategic objective 7
To reduce abject poverty

Expected accomplishments	*Indicators of achievement*	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Percentage*
			All fields of operation
(a) Increased ability of abject poor individuals to meet their basic food needs	Percentage of poverty gap bridged for abject poor social safety net families that receive assistance	Baseline	89.0
		Target	100.0
		Actual (2011)	100.0
			West Bank and Gaza Strip
(b) Improved targeting of poor ensured	Percentage of social safety net individuals who are abject poor	Baseline	48.0
		Target	60.0
		Actual (2011)	51.3

Outputs

- An average of 288,405 individuals received quarterly food aid and/or a cash subsidy
- 80 per cent of registered pregnant and nursing women received entitlements

- A total of 6,771 persons with disabilities were assisted
- Social workers' caseloads were to have been reduced to 200, but as result of funding constraints, they rose to 273

Strategic objective 8
To mitigate the immediate effects of emergencies on individuals

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
Reduced impact of family financial crisis	Percentage of identified families granted selective cash assistance	Baseline	5.5
		Target	7.0
		Actual (2011)	2.7

Strategic objective 9
To provide inclusive financial services and increased access to credit

Expected accomplishment	*Indicators of achievement*	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Number*
Increased provision of financial services	(i) Number of loans disbursed	Baseline (2010)	33 593
		Target	52 581
		Actual (2011)	39 993
			Millions of US dollars
	(ii) Value of loans disbursed	Baseline (2010)	42.3
		Target	60.5
		Actual (2011)	44.4

Outputs

- A new microfinance branch office was opened in Irbid, Jordan, during the period, expanding the operating network to 21 branch offices
- The microfinance programme financed 39,998 loans valued at $44.38 million, with 14,627 loans valued at $22.97 million financed in the occupied Palestinian territory, 17,718 loans worth $12.36 million financed in the Syrian Arab Republic and 7,654 loans worth $9.05 million in Jordan
- The overall annual outreach to clients grew by 19 per cent, while the value of the portfolio increased by 10 per cent. Growth was the highest in the Syrian Arab Republic, where the annual outreach advanced by 23 per cent, while outreach in Jordan increased by 18 per cent and grew by 15 per cent in the occupied Palestinian territory
- A total of 29,616 loans, valued at $32.03 million, were provided to enterprises, through the programme's microenterprise credit, microenterprise credit plus, small-scale enterprise, solidarity group lending and women's household credit products

- A total of 10,386 consumer and housing loans valued at $12.35 million were provided to support education and health, to build household assets and to enable families to improve their housing through loans for repair, maintenance and construction
- Palestine refugees accounted for 34 per cent of all clients, while informal enterprises accounted for 85 per cent of all enterprises financed
- Loans to women represented 37 per cent of portfolio outreach and young clients between 18 and 30 years of age accounted for 30 per cent of all borrowers
- The programme remained completely self-reliant, with an operational self-sufficiency rate of 110 per cent, which produced a net income of $866,647 on total operating revenues of $9.39 million

Strategic objective 10
To improve employability

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishments	*Indicators of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
(a) Improved access to educational science facilities/ vocational training centres	Percentage of students from vulnerable groups enrolled in vocational training centres and educational science facilities	Baseline	12.0
		Target	21.0
		Actual (2011)	16.9
(b) Improved market responsiveness of educational science facilities/vocational training centres	(i) Male employment rates for graduates within 12 months of graduation	Baseline	91.0
		Target	95.0
		Actual (2011)	86.8
	(ii) Female employment rates for graduates within 12 months of graduation	Baseline	86.0
		Target	89.0
		Actual (2011)	81.2

Outputs

- 27.8 per cent of students found a job in their field of study within one year after graduating from a vocational training centre[13]
- 100 per cent of students will have received career guidance in grades 9 and 10
- A total of 346 scholarships for higher education were provided

[13] As at end 2010.

Strategic objective 11
To improve the urban environment through sustainable camp development and upgrading of substandard infrastructure and accommodations

Expected accomplishments	*Indicators of achievement*	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Number*
(a) Improved upgrading of family accommodations identified as substandard in camps	Number of identified social safety net refugee population living in substandard shelters that have improved living conditions	Baseline	141
		Target	1 920
		Actual (2011)	8
(b) Enhanced implementation of camp improvement plans	(i) Camp representatives have full ownership of plans	Baseline	1
		Target	5
		Actual (2011)	1
	(ii) Open public spaces designed and/or implemented in camps	Baseline	2
		Target	5
		Actual (2011)	4

Outputs

- In all, 601 shelters were rehabilitated, extended or reconstructed in Lebanon, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including 484 families who were social safety net beneficiaries
- As part of a large project in Neirab camp in the Syrian Arab Republic, the rehabilitation of 34 housing units was completed, of which 12 families were social safety net cases
- In the Gaza Strip, under emergency interventions, 2,468 shelters were repaired and/or reconstructed after destruction, including 264 families who are social safety net beneficiaries
- In Jordan, no interventions were carried out owing to lack of funding
- A total of 950 families were accommodated in emergency shelters and collective centres around Nahr el-Bared camp
- Forty-nine UNRWA facilities were built, reconstructed or extended
- A camp improvement plan was under preparation for Rashidieh camp, Lebanon; Huson camp, Jordan; and Arroub camp, West Bank

D. Goal 4
Human rights enjoyed to the fullest

75. Just and equitable human development and effective humanitarian action require respect for human rights. The achievement of the Agency's first three human development goals, therefore, relies on the fourth: ensuring that human rights are enjoyed to the fullest. The Agency's role in protection is an integral part of its mandate to meet refugee needs in education, health, relief and social services, microfinance and adequate living conditions, including shelter, as well as the rights

set down in international legal instruments. Its work in this regard is pursued in cooperation with national authorities, other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations.

76. UNRWA protection work has internal and external dimensions. Internally, UNRWA promotes protection through programming and service delivery. Externally, it engages in the monitoring and reporting of refugee conditions and undertakes appropriate interventions, and the Commissioner-General highlights the need for a just and durable solution to the conflict, one that respects the right of the refugees.

77. The provision of essential services by UNRWA, and ensuring access to them under different circumstances, including conflict, is integral to the enjoyment of rights of the refugees. Direct and indirect engagement with other actors helps to create and consolidate an environment and practices in which rights are respected. Those rights include economic and social rights associated with the UNRWA core areas of service delivery, such as education, as well as civil and political rights, such as the right to life. In addition, as a major provider of public services, UNRWA seeks to ensure that the manner in which it provides them ensures respect for the rights, dignity and safety of its beneficiaries. It does this by, for example, mainstreaming minimum protection standards in all programmes across all fields of operation, acting to eliminate violence in schools, taking steps to prevent gender-based violence and abuse of children and promoting knowledge of individual rights through long-term human rights and tolerance programming in its schools. Monitoring and reporting mechanisms help in the effective implementation of protection activities.

Strategic objective 12
To ensure service delivery meets the protection needs of beneficiaries, including vulnerable groups

Expected accomplishment	*Indicators of achievement*	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Percentage*
Improved conformity of service delivery to international standards, particularly protection standards	(i) Degree of compliance with protection standards	Baseline	0.0
		Target	50.0
		Actual (2011)	53.3
	(ii) Percentage of schools certified as implementing measures to ensure they are violence free[a]	Baseline	0.0
		Target	38.0
		Actual (2011)	n/a

Note: n/a = not available.

[a] Indicator to be replaced for next biennium.

Strategic objective 13
To safeguard and advance the rights of Palestine refugees by promoting respect for human rights, international humanitarian law and international refugee law

Expected accomplishment	*Indicators of achievement*	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Percentage*
Improved programmes and policies regarding protection	(i) Percentage of identified vulnerable refugees whose specific needs are addressed	Baseline	12.0
		Target	44.0
		Actual (2011)	58.0
	(ii) Percentage of protection issues eliciting positive responses from authorities	Baseline	13.0
		Target	33.0
		Actual (2011)	29.3

Output

- UNRWA developed a multisectoral approach to address gender-based violence, and in all fields of operation referral systems were developed to increase survivors' access to services
- A total of 1,316 UNRWA staff and 255 staff and volunteers from community-based organizations were trained in detection, referral and counselling for survivors of gender-based violence

Strategic objective 14
To strengthen refugee capacity to formulate and implement sustainable social services in their communities

Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Percentage*
Refugee capacity to formulate and implement sustainable social services in their communities	Percentage of community-based organizations improving their level of performance in financial management, service delivery and governance	Baseline	5.0
		Target	69.0
		Actual (2011)	49.7

Output

- A capacity-assessment toolkit that measures the capacity of community-based organizations, developed in 2010, was applied to 20 per cent of UNRWA-supported community-based organizations
- Eight community development centres (seven in the Gaza Strip and one in the Syrian Arab Republic) were built, reconstructed or extended. Two community development centres and a women's programme centre were under construction

Strategic objective 15
To ensure Palestine refugee registration and eligibility for UNRWA services are carried out in accordance with relevant international standards

Expected accomplishment	*Indicators of achievement*	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Percentage*
Improved access to registration	(i) Percentage of individual registration records processed	Baseline	n/a
		Target	100.0
		Actual (2011)	96.1
	(ii) Percentage of families to whom registration cards were issued	Baseline	n/a
		Target	70.0
		Actual (2011)	n/a
	(iii) Percentage of new applicants meeting UNRWA standards	Baseline	94.0
		Target	94.0
		Actual (2011)	n/a

Note: n/a = not available.

Outputs

- 61.8 per cent of new applicants were processed within one month
- All documents have been digitized
- All registration officers have been trained in using the new refugee registration information system

Endnote

78. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 302 (IV) of December 1949. The Agency is a subsidiary body of the Assembly and became operational on 1 May 1950, responding to the needs of about 750,000 Palestine refugees. It is one of the largest United Nations programmes, with a population of 4,797,723 registered Palestine refugees under its mandate as at end 2011, and over 30,000 staff.

79. The Agency's mission is to assist Palestine refugees in achieving their full potential in human development until a durable and just solution is found to the refugee issue. The Agency fulfils its humanitarian and human development mandate by providing protection and essential services to Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Its services include basic (and in Lebanon, secondary) education, comprehensive primary health care, emergency relief, social interventions, microfinance, shelter and infrastructural support.

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